SHORT STORIE

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Our Reasons for War.

BY PRESIDENT WILSON.

International law had its origin in an attempt to set up some law that would be respected and observed on the seas, where no nation had right of dominion and where lay the free highways of the world.

By painful stage after stage has that law been built up, with meager enough results, but always with a clear view of what the heart and conscience of mankind demanded.

This minimum of right the German government has swept aside.

I am not now thinking of the property involved, immense and serious tho that is, but only of the wanton and wholesale destruction of the lives of noncombatants, men, women and children engaged in pursuits which have always, even in the darkest periods of modern history, been deemed innocent and legitimate. The German submarine warfare is a warfare against mankind. The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are no common wrongs; they cut to the very roots of human life.

We have no quarrel with the German people. It was not upon their impulse that their government acted in entering this war. It was not with their previous knowledge or approval. It was a war determined upon as wars used to be determined upon in the old, unhappy days when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and wars were provoked and waged in the interest of little groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use their fellow men as pawns and tools.

Self-governed nations do not fill their neighbor states with spies or set the course of intrigue to bring about some critical posture of affairs which will give them an opportunity to strike and make conquest.

One of the things that has served to convince us that the Prussian autocracy was not and could not be our friend is that from the very outset of the present war it has filled our unsuspecting communities and our offices of government with spies and set criminal intrigues everywhere afoot against our national unity of counsel, our peace within and without, our industries, and our commerce.

Its spies were here even before the war began. The intrigues which have more than once come perilously near to disturbing the peace and dislocating the industries of the country have been carried out at the instigation, with the support, and even under the personal direction of official agents of the imperial government accredited to the Government of the United States. That it means to stir up enmities against us at our very doors the intercepted note to the German minister at Mexico City is eloquent evidence.

We are now about to accept gage of battle with this natural foe to liberty, and shall, if necessary, spend the whole force of the Nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power. The world must be made safe for democracy.

NEEDS ENGINEERS.

"After the war is over the world will have to be rebuilt," says C. E. Ferris, dean of the engineering departments, University of Tennessee, "and American engineers will have to do it."

Dean Ferris reports that the war has already made serious inroads upon the classes of the State University and that the end is nowhere in sight. Over half of the members of the junior class answered the first call to the colors and enlisted for instruction at the officers' training camp. Many have gone as volunteers, and the draft has caught a number.

"I would that I could talk loud enough to tell all of Tennessee of the conditions of the war, as it affects engineering," said Mr. Ferris. "I would tell all young men who are just leaving high school to be certain to enroll in the colleges this fall. The demand for engineers of all kinds is greater at the present moment than it has ever been before.

"The demand will continue to grow. When the war is ended the entire world will have to be rebuilt, and the job will fall to the American engineer and none other. The end of the war, as I see it, is a long way off. The young men who enroll as freshmen this year will have plenty of time to graduate before peace arrives. But when it does come the need for them will be great."

Dean Ferris, as a member of the coal economy commission, has given up his vacation this year, that he might make a tour of the South to educate manufacturers in the more economical use of fuel. He has a son in the military service, and says he feels that he, too, is doing his "bit" by assisting in the movement for conservation of the national sources.

OVERLOOKED MEAT SUPPLY.

As war's drain on food resources continues to grow more acute, new reservoirs have to be tapped. Already reindeer meat, from Alaska, is replacing beef on the Pacific Coast, and Christian Leden, the missionary-explorer of Greenland and Hudson Bay, sponsors a plan for mobilizing the food resources of the Arctics, the Boston Globe says.

It appears that the Eskimo, believing animals are sent by the Great Spirit to be killed for food, conceives it to be his duty to kill all he sees. Enormous quantities of most valuable meat are thus wasted—meat which the Northern tribes could, Mr. Leden thinks, easily be induced to save and sell to the people of the lower altitudes.

The German army, from the very start of the war, has been fed largely on dried meat. One pound of dry meat is equal to five pounds of fresh meat, and it is, in addition, far easier to transport. The Eskimos are especially skilful in drying their game, which would make a resort to this source of food supply all the more feasible.

The Arctics are far richer in animal resources than we of the Temperate zone suppose. Caribou, walrus, salmon—all are prolific of foodstuffs, not to mention the byproducts of leather, furs and oil. It is the explorer's computation that the Arctics, even moderately exploited, would yield enough meat to feed 70,000 men for a year. He assures us that caribou makes the best venison, and that the walrus, being fond himself of oysters, makes good food.

DEMAND FOR HEAVY GUNS.

Fortunately for the United States Army that is to go into action in France next spring, British and French heavy gun arsenals will have by then a surplus of output.

If the United States had to depend on its own output of heavy guns its armies would come into action about 1919, declares the Baltimore Sun. Its forces at present have only 600 guns fit for service at the front. The Allies have heavy guns by the tens of thousands. It is said that in the Messines battle, which was on a small front, the British packed in 2,500 heavy guns. The number in the new offensive was much greater. The cannon stood almost literally limber to limber in rows extending back several miles.

No such big gun organization can be created in the United States, on an adequate scale, for at least a year, and probably more, whereas the Allies have to wind up the war in 1918 to avoid ruin themselves. Only two plants in the United States have facilities for big gun manufacture. The French government has, however, offered to turn over for the use of the United States forces its surplus of big guns, and by the time the "Abexes" grow sufficiently to take their place at the front more will be available.

It seems as if the wise policy would be for Washington to arrange to get as much heavy artillery from Britain and France as they can spare, saving transport overseas of the guns and munitions. Secretary Baker has asked an appropriation of $2,000,000,000 for heavy artillery, however, and arming is to proceed with utmost vigor.

THE BOOK OF BOOKS.

It did not require President Wilson's recent man-to-man admonition to the soldiers and sailors of America to create an unprecedented demand for the book that he advised each of them studiously to read. Already there has been so great a call for pocket Bibles and Testaments, according to publishers and booksellers, that the supply can scarcely keep pace with the demand. Old electrotype plates of the Scriptures, in the small sizes, are said to be worth large sums at this time for emergency use.

This fact is significant of the spiritual nature of the great conflict in which the nations are engaged. The Bible is, as students have frequently pointed out, the only record we have of the spiritual history of mankind. Even thru the dark patterns of its wars and political histories, its drab backgrounds of genealogies, runs the golden thread of man's spiritual growth upon which the recorded events are hung. It is this thread of gold, growing brighter and more beautiful as it emerges into the Gospels of the Christian period, that makes the Bible indeed "the way of life" for civilized man in great crises.

In it, as President Wilson truly says, every man may find what he wants to know of the deeper things of life; for there, if he comes earnestly seeking, he will discover, in the President's words, "the key to his own heart."

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VOL. XLV. CHICAGO, ILL., OCTOBER 20, 1917. No. 42.

The Path-Master

By Robert W. Chambers

"The bankrupt can always pay one debt, but neither God nor man can credit him with the payment."

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I.

WHEN Dingman, the fat game-warden, came panting over the mountain from Spencers to confer with young Byram, road-master at Foxville, he found that youthful official reshingling his barn.

The two men observed each other warily for a moment; Byram jingled the shingle-nails in his apron-pocket; Dingman, the game-warden, took a brief but intelligent survey of the premises, which included an unpainted house, a hen-yard, and the newly shingled barn.

"Hello, Byram," he said, at length.

"Is that you?" replied Byram coldly.

He was a law-abiding young man; he had not shot at a bird out of season for three years.

After a pause the game-warden said, "Ain't you a-comin' down off'n that ridgepole?"

"I'm a-comin' down when I quit shinglin'," replied the road-master, cautiously. Dingman waited; Byram fitted a shingle, fished out a nail from his apron-pocket, and drove it with unnecessary noise.

The encircling forest re-echoed the hammer strokes; a squirrel scolded from the orchard.

"Didn't I hear a gun go off in them alder bushes this morning?" inquired the game-warden. Byram made no reply, but hammered violently. "Anybody got a ice-house 'round here?" persisted the game-warden.

Byram turned a noncommittal eye on the warden.

"I quit that business three years ago, an' you know it," he said. "I ain't got no ice-house for to hide no pa'tridges, an' I ain't a-shootin' out o' season for the Saratogy market!"

The warden regarded him with composure.

"Who said you was shootin' pa'tridges?" he asked. But Byram broke in:

"What would I go shootin' them birds for when I ain't got no ice-box?"

"Who says you got a ice-box?" replied the warden, calmly. "There is other folks in Foxville, ain't there?"

Byram grew angrier. "If you want to stop this shootin' out o' season," he said, "you go to them rich hotel men in Saratogy. Are you afraid jest because they've got a pull with them politicians that makes the game laws and then pays the hotel men to serve 'em game out o' season an' reason? Them's the men to ketch; them's the men that set the poor men to vi'latin' the law. Folks here ain't got no money to buy powder 'n' shot for to shoot nothin'. But when them Saratogy men offers two dollars a bird for pa'tridges out o' season, what d'ye think is bound to happen?"

"Shootin'," said the warden, sententiously. "An' it's been did, too. An' I'm here to find out who done that shootin' in them alders."

"Well, why don't you find out, then?" sneered young Byram from his perch on the ridgepole.

"That's it," said the warden, bitterly; "all you folks hang together like bees in a swarm-bunch. You're nuthin' but a passel o' critters that digs ginseng for them Chinese an' goes gunnin' for pa'tridges out o' season——"

"I'll go gunning for you!" shouted Byram, climbing down the ladder in a rage. "I am going to knock your head off, you darned thing!"

Prudence halted him; the game-warden, who had at first meditated flight, now eyed him with patronizing assurance.

"Don't git riled with me, young man," he said. "I'm a 'ficial of this State. Anyway, it ain't you I'm lookin' for——"

"Well, why don't you say so, then?" broke in Byram, with an oath.

"But it's one o' your family," added the warden.

"My family!" stammered Byram, in genuine surprise. Then an ugly light glimmered in his eyes. "You mean Dan McCloud?"

"I do," said the warden, "an' I'm fixed to git him, too."

"Well, what do you come to me for, then?" demanded Byram.

"For because Dan McCloud is your cousin, ain't he? An' I jest dropped in on you to see how the land lay. If it's a fight it's a fight, but I jest want to know how many I'm to buck against. Air you with him? I've proofs. I know he's got his ice-box stuffed full o' pa'tridges an' woodcock. Air you with him?"

"No," said Byram, with a scowl; "but I ain't with you, neither!"

"Don't get riled," said the warden. "I'm that friendly with folks I don't wanter rile nobody. Look here, friend, you an' me is 'ficials, ain't we?"

"I'm road-master of Foxville," said Byram, aggressively.

"Well, then, let's set down onto this bunch o' shingles an' talk it over 'ficially," suggested the warden, suavely.

"All right," said Byram, pocketing his hammer; "if you're out to ketch Dan McCloud I don't care. He's a low-down, shifty cuss, who won't pay his road-tax, an' I say it if he is my cousin, an' no shame to me, neither."

The warden nodded and winked.

"If you he'p me ketch Dan McCloud with them birds in his ice-box I'll he'p you git your road-tax outen him," he proposed. "An' you git half the reward, too."

"I ain't no spy," retorted Byram, "an' I don't want no reward outen nobody."

"But you're a 'ficial, same as me," persisted the warden. "Set down onto them shingles, friend, an' talk it over."

Byram sat down, fingering the head of his hammer; the warden, a fat, shiny man, with tiny, greenish eyes and an unshaven jaw, took a seat beside him and began twisting a greasy black mustache.

"You an' me's 'ficials," he said, with dignity, "an' we has burdens that folks don't know. My burden is these here folks that shoots pa'tridges in July; your burdens is them people who don't pay no road-tax."

"One o' them people is Dan McCloud, an' I'm goin' after that road-tax tonight," said Byram.

"It's only about your road-tax."

"Can't you wait till I ketch McCloud with them birds?" asked the warden anxiously.

"No, I can't," snapped Byram; "I can't wait for no such thing!" But he spoke without enthusiasm.

"Can't we make it a kind o' 'ficial surprise for him, then?" suggested the warden. "Me an' you is 'ficials; your path-masters is 'ficials. We'll all go an' see Dan McCloud, that's what we'll do. How many path-masters hev you got to back you up?"

Byram's face grew red as fire.

"One," he said; "we ain't a metropolipus."

"Well, git your path-master an' come on, anyhow," persisted the game-warden, rising and buttoning his faded coat.

"I—I can't," muttered Byram.

"Ain't you road-master?" asked Dingman, astonished.

"Yes."

"Then, can't you git your own path-master to do his dooty an' execoote the statoots?"

"You see," stammered Byram, "I app'inted a—a lady."

"A what!" cried the game-warden.

"A lady," repeated Byram, firmly. "Tell the truth, we 'ain't got no path-master; we've got a path-mistress—Elton's kid, you know——"

"Elton?"

"Yes."

"What hung hisself in his orchard?"

"Yes."

"His kid? The girl that folks say is sweet on Dan McCloud?"

A scowl crisped Byram's face.

"It's a lie," he said, thickly.

After a silence Byram spoke more calmly. "Old man Elton he didn't leave her nothin'. She done chores around an' taught school some, down to Frog Holler. She's that poor—nothin' but pertaters an' greens for to eat, an' her a-savin' her money for to go to one o' them female institoots where women learn to nurse sick folks."

"So you 'pinted her path-master to kinder he'p her along?"

"I—I kinder did."

"She's only a kid."

"Only a kid. 'Bout sixteen."

"An' it's against the law?"

"Kinder 'gainst it."

The game-warden pretended to stifle a yawn.

"Well," he said petulantly, "I never knowed nothin' about it—if they ask me over to Spencers."

"That's right! An' I'll he'p you do your dooty regardin' them pa'tridges," said Byram, quickly. "Dan McCloud's a loafer an' no good. When he's drunk he raises hell down to the store. Foxville is jest plumb sick o' him."

"Is it?" inquired the game-warden, with interest.

"The folks is that sick o' him that they was talkin' some o' runnin' him acrost the mountains," replied Byram; "but I jest made the boys hold their horses till I got that there road-tax outen him first."

"Can't you git it?"

"Naw," drawled Byram. "I sent Billy Delany to McCloud's shanty to collect it, but McCloud near killed Bill with a ax. That was Tuesday. Some o' the boys was fixin' to run McCloud outer town, but I guess most of us ain't hankerin' to lead the demonstration."

"'Fraid?"

"Ya-as," drawled Byram.

The game-warden laboriously produced a six-shooter from his side pocket. A red bandanna handkerchief protected the shiny barrel; he unwrapped this, regarded the weapon doubtfully, and rubbed his fat thumb over the butt.

"Huh!" ejaculated Byram, contemptuously, "he's got a repeatin'-rifle; he can cut a pa'tridge's head off from here to that butternut 'cross the creek!"

"I'm goin' to git into his ice-house all the same," said the warden, without much enthusiasm.

"An' I'm bound to git my road-tax," said Byram, "but jest how I'm to operate I dunno."

"Me neither," added the warden, musingly, "God knows I hate to shoot people."

What he really meant was that he hated to be shot at.

A young girl in faded pink sunbonnet passed along the road, followed by a dog. She returned the road-master's awkward salutation with shy composure. A few moments later the game-warden saw her crossing the creek on the stepping-stones; her golden-haired collie dog splashed after her.

"That's a slick girl," he said, twisting his heavy black mustache into two greasy points.

Byram glanced at him with a scowl.

"That's the kid," he said.

"Eh? Elton's?"

"Yes."

"Your path-master?"

"Well, what of it?"

"Nuthin'—she's good-lookin'—for a path-master," said the warden, with a vicious leer intended for a compliment.

"What of it?" demanded Byram, harshly.

"Be you fixin' to splice with that there girl some day?" asked the game-warden, jocosely.

"What of it?" repeated Byram, with an ugly stare.

"Oh," said the warden, hastily, "I

...dding him

...me?" he asked.

...bout the road-tax," began looking up at him with pleasant eyes.

"What about my road-tax?"

"It's due, isn't it?" replied the girl, with a faint smile.

"Is it?" he retorted, staring at her insolently. "Well, don't let it worry you, young woman."

The smile died out of her eyes.

"It does worry me," she said; "you owe the path-master two dollars, or a day's work on the roads."

"Let the path-master come and get it," he replied.

"I am the path-master," she said.

He looked down at her curiously. She had outgrown her faded pink skirts; her sleeves were too short, and so tight that the plump, white arm threatened to split them to the shoulder. Her shoes were quite as ragged as his; he noticed, however, that her hands were slender and soft under their creamy coat of tan, and that her fingers were as carefully kept as his own.

"You must be Ellice Elton," he said, remembering the miserable end of old man Elton, who also had been a gentleman until a duel with drink left him dangling by the neck under the new moon some three years since.

"Yes," she said, with a slight drawl, "and I think you must be Dan McCloud."

"Why do you think so?" he asked.

"From your rudeness."

He gave her an ugly look; his face slowly reddened.

"So you're the path-master?" he said.

"Yes."

"And you expect to get money out of me?"

She flushed painfully.

"You can't get it," he said harshly; "I'm dog poor; I haven't enough to buy two loads for my rifle. So I'll buy one," he added, with a sneer.

She was silent. He chewed the mint-leaf between his teeth and stared at her dog.

"If you are so poor——" she began.

"Poor!" he cut in, with a mirthless laugh; "it's only a word to you, I suppose."

He had forgotten her ragged and outgrown clothing, her shabby shoes, in the fresh beauty of her face. In every pulse-beat that stirred her white throat, in every calm breath that faintly swelled the faded pink calico over her breast, he felt that he had proved his own vulgarity in the presence of his betters. A sullen resentment arose in his soul against her.

"I don't know what you mean," she said; "I also am terribly poor. If you mean that I am not sorry for you, you are mistaken. Only the poor can understand each other."

"I can't understand you," he sneered. "Why do you come and ask me to pay money to your road-master when I have no money?"

"Because I am the path-master. I must do my duty. I won't ask you for any money, but I must ask you to work out your tax. I can't help it, can I?"

He looked at her in moody, suspicious silence.

Idle, vicious, without talent, without ambition, he had drifted part way thru college, a wild party on those wealthy young men who idle thru the great universities, leaving unsavory records. His father had managed to pay his debts, then very selfishly died, and there was nobody to support the son and heir, just emerging from a drunken junior year.

Creditors made a clean sweep in Albany; the rough shooting-lodge in the Fox Hills was left. Young McCloud took it.

The pine timber he sold as it stood; this kept him in drink and a little food. Then, when starvation looked in at his dirty window, he took his rifle and shot partridges.

Now, for years he had been known as a dealer in game out of season; the great hotels at Saratoga paid him well for his dirty work; the game-wardens watched to catch him. But his ice-house was a cave somewhere out in the woods, and as yet no warden had been quick enough to snare McCloud red-handed.

Musing over these things, the young fellow leaned on the rotting fence, staring vacantly at the collie dog, who in turn stared gravely at him.

The path-master, running her tanned fingers thru her curls, laid one hand on her dog's silky head and looked up at him.

"I do wish you would work out your tax," she said.

Before McCloud could find voice to answer, the alder thicket across the road parted, and an old man shambled forth on a pair of unsteady bowed legs.

"The kid's right," he said, with a hoarse laugh; "git yewr pick an' hoe, young man, an' save them two dollars tew pay yewr pa's bad debts!"

It was old Tansey, McCloud's nearest neighbor, loaded down with a bundle of alder staves, wood-ax in one hand, rope in the other, supporting the heavy weight of wood on his bent back.

"Get out of that alder-patch!" said McCloud, sharply.

"Ain't I a-gittin'?" replied Tansey, winking at the little path-master.

"And keep out after this," added McCloud. "Those alders belong to me!"

"To yew and the blue-jays," assented Tansey, stopping to wipe the sweat from his heavy face.

"He's only cutting alders for bean-poles," observed the path-master, resting her slender fingers on her hips.

"Well, he can cut his bean-poles on his own land hereafter," said McCloud.

"Gosh!" observed Tansey, in pretended admiration. "Ain't he neighborly? Cut 'em on my own land, hey? Don't git passionate," he added, moving off thru the dust; "passionate folks is liable to pyralyze their in'ards, young man!"

"Don't answer!" said the path-master, watching the sullen rage in McCloud's eyes.

"Pay yewr debts!" called out Tansey, at the turn of the road. "Pay yewr debts, an' the Lord will pay yewr taxes!"

"The Lord can pay mine, then," said McCloud to the path-master, "for I'll never pay a cent of taxes in Foxville. Now what do you say to that?"

The path-master had nothing to say. She went away thru the golden dust, one slim hand on the head of her collie dog, who trotted beside her waving his plumy tail.

That evening at the store where McCloud had gone to buy cartridges, Tansey taunted him, and he replied contemptuously. Then young Byram flung a half-veiled threat at him, and McCloud replied with a threat that angered the loungers around the stove.

"What you want is a rawhide," said McCloud, eying young Byram.

"I guess I do," said Byram, "an' I'm a-going to buy one, too—unless you pay that there road-tax."

"I'll be at home when you call," replied McCloud, quietly, picking up his rifle and pocketing his cartridges.

Somebody near the stove said, "Go fur him!" to Byram, and the young road-master glared at McCloud.

"He was a-sparkin' Ellis Elton," added Tansey, grinning; "yew owe him a few for that, too, Byram."

Byram turned white, but made no movement. McCloud laughed.

"Wait," said the game-warden, sitting behind the stove; "just wait a while; that's all. No man can fire me into a ditch full o' stinging nettles an' live to larf no pizened larf at me!"

"Dingman," said McCloud, contemptuously, "you're like the rest of them here in Foxville—all foxes who run to earth when they smell a Winchester."

He flung his rifle carelessly into the hollow of his arm; the muzzle was in line with the game-warden, and that official promptly moved out of range, upsetting his chair in his haste.

"Quit that!" bawled the storekeeper, from behind his counter.

"Quit what—eh?" demanded McCloud. "Here, you old rat, give me the whisky bottle! Quick! What? Money to pay? Trot out that grog or I'll shoot your lamps out!"

"He's been a-drinkin' again," whispered the game-warden. "For God's sake, give him that bottle, somebody!"

But as the bottle was pushed across the counter, McCloud swung his rifle-butt and knocked the bottle into slivers. "Drinks for the crowd!" he said, with an ugly laugh. "Get down and lap it up off the floor, you fox cubs!"

Then, pushing the fly-screen door open with one elbow, he sauntered out into the moonlight, careless who might follow him, altho now that he had insulted and defied the entire town there were men behind who would have done him a mischief if they had dared believe him off his guard.

He walked moodily on in the moonlight, disdaining either to listen or glance behind him. There was a stoop to his shoulders now, a loose carriage which sometimes marks a man whose last shred of self-respect has gone, leaving him nothing but the naked virtues and vices with which he was born. McCloud's vices were many, tho some of them lay dormant; his virtues, if they were virtues, could be counted in a breath—a natural courage, and a generous heart, paralyzed and inactive under a load of despair and a deep resentment against everybody and everything. He hated the fortunate and the unfortunate alike; he despised his neighbors, he despised himself. His inertia had given place to a fierce restlessness; he felt a sudden and curious desire for a physical struggle with a strong antagonist—like young Byram.

All at once the misery of his poverty arose up before him. It was not unendurable simply because he was obliged to endure it.

The thought of his hopeless poverty stupefied him at first, then rage followed. Poverty was an antagonist—like young Byram—a powerful one. How he hated it! How he hated Byram! Why? And, as he walked there shuffling up the dust in the moonlight, he thought, for the first time in his life, that if poverty were only a breathing creature he would strangle it with his naked hands. But logic carried him no further; he began to brood again, remembering Tansey's insults and the white anger of young Byram, and the threats from the dim group around the stove, if they molested him they would remember it. He would neither pay taxes nor work for them.

Then he thought of the path-master, reddening as he remembered Tansey's accusation. He shrugged his shoulders and straightened up, dismissing her from his mind, but she returned, only to be again dismissed with an effort.

When for the third time the memory of the little path-master returned, he glanced up as tho he could see her in the flesh, standing in the road before his house. She was there—in the flesh.

The moonlight silvered her hair, and her face was the face of a spirit; it quickened the sluggish blood in his veins to see her so in the moonlight.

She said: "I thought that if you knew I should be obliged to pay your road-tax if you do not, you would pay. Would you?"

A shadow glided across the moonlight; it was the collie dog, and it came and looked up into McCloud's shadowy eyes.

"Yes—I would," he said; "but I cannot."

His heart began to beat faster; a tide of wholesome blood stirred and flowed thru his veins. It was the latent decency within him awaking.

"Little path-master," he said, "I am very poor; I have no money. But I will work out my taxes because you ask me."

He raised his head and looked at the spectral forest where dead pines towered, ghastly in the moon's beams. That morning he had cut the last wood on his own land; he had nothing left to sell but a patch of brambles and a hut which no one would buy.

"I guess I'm no good," he said; "I can't work."

"But what will you do?" she asked, with pitiful eyes raised.

"Do? Oh, what I have done. I can shoot partridges."

"Market-shooting is against the law," she said faintly.

"The law!" he repeated; "it seems to me there is nothing but law in this God-forsaken hole!"

"Can't you live within the law? It is not difficult, is it?" she asked.

"It is difficult for me," he said sullenly. The dogged brute in him was awaking in its turn. He was already sorry he had promised to work out his taxes. Then he remembered the penalty. Clearly he would have to work, or she would be held responsible.

"If anybody would take an unskilled man," he began, "I—I would try to get something to do."

"Won't they?"

"No. I tried it—once."

"Only once?"

He gave a short laugh and stooped to pat the collie, saying, "Don't bother me, little path-master."

"No—I won't," she replied slowly.

She went away in the moonlight, saying good night and calling her collie, and he walked up the slope to the house, curiously at peace with himself and the dim world hidden in the shadows around.

He was not sleepy. As he had no candles, he sat down in the moonlight, idly balancing his rifle on his knees. From force of habit he loaded it, then rubbed the stock with the palm of his hand, eyes dreaming.

Into the tangled garden a whippoor-will flashed on noiseless wings, rested a moment, unseen, then broke out into husky, breathless calling. A minute later the whispering call came from the forest's edge, then farther away, almost inaudible in the thickening dusk.

And, as he sat there, thinking of the little path-master, he became aware of a man slinking along the moonlit road below. His heart stopped, then the pulses went bounding, and his fingers closed on his rifle.

There were other men in the moonlight now—he counted five—and he called out to them, demanding their business.

"You're our business," shouted back young Byram. "Git up an' dust out o' Foxville, you dirty loafer!"

"Better stay where you are," said McCloud, grimly.

Then old Tansey bawled: "Yew low cuss, git outer this here taown! Yew sir meaner 'n pussley an' meaner 'n quack-root, an' we air bound tew run yew into them mountings, b' gosh!"

There was a silence, then the same

(Continued on Page 31.)

IN DAISIES DEEP

Miss Summer was too sweet to stay, and sings her good-by song:
She'll go to sleep in daisies deep, to dream the winter long.

And Winter'll sigh in every place,
Because he never saw her face.

But still we'll weave a happy day in meadows white with snow,
Tho Winter'll weep to hear us say we loved the summer so!

Ah, me! He'll sigh, in every place,
Because he never saw her face.

...ll the
...ow that you
...path-master when
...ncers say she's sweet
...Cloud——"

"A lie!" roared young Byram.

"Is, it?" asked the warden, with interest. "He's a good-lookin' chap, an' folks say——"

"It's a d—n lie!" yelled Byram, "an' you can tell them folks that I say so. She don't know Dan McCloud to speak to him, an' he's that besotted with rum half the time that if he spoke to her she'd die o' fright, for all his good looks."

"Well, well," said the game-warden, soothingly; "I guess he ain't no account nohow, an' it's jest as well that we ketch him with them birds an' run him off to jail or acrost them mountains yonder."

"I don't care where he is as long as I git my tax," muttered Byram.

But he did care. At the irresponsible suggestion of the gossiping game-warden a demon of jealousy had arisen within him. Was it true that Dan McCloud had cast his sodden eyes on Ellie Elton? If it were true, was the girl aware of it? Perhaps she had even exchanged words with the young man, for McCloud was a gentleman's son and could make himself agreeable when he chose, and he could appear strangely at ease in his ragged clothes—nay, even attractive.

All Foxville hated him; he was not one of them; if he had been, perhaps they could have found something to forgive in his excesses and drunken recklessness.

But, tho with them, he was not of them; he came from the city—Albany; he had been educated at Princeton College; he neither thought, spoke, nor carried himself as they did. Even in his darkest hours he never condescended to their society, nor, drunk as he was, would he permit any familiarities from the inhabitants.

Byram, who had been to an agricultural college, and who, on his return to Foxville had promptly relapsed into the hideous dialect which he had imbibed with his mother's milk, never forgave the contempt with which McCloud had received his advances, nor that young man's amused repudiation of the relationship which Byram had ventured to recall.

So it came about that Byram at length agreed to aid the game-warden in his lawful quest for the ice-box, and he believed sincerely that it was love of law and duty which prompted him.

But their quest was fruitless; McCloud met them at the gate with a repeating rifle, knocked the game-warden down, took away his revolver, and laughed at Byram, who stood awkwardly apart, dazed by the business-like rapidity of the operation.

"Road-tax?" repeated McCloud, with a sneer. "I guess not. If the roads are good enough for cattle like you, pay for them yourselves! I use the woods and I pay no road-tax."

"If you didn't have that there rifle——" began Byram, sullenly.

"It's quite empty; look for yourself!" said McCloud, jerking back the lever.

The mortified game-warden picked himself out of the nettle-choked ditch where he had been painfully squatting and started toward Foxville.

"I'll ketch you at it yet!" he called back; "I'll fix you an' your ice-box!"

McCloud laughed.

"Gimme that two dollars," demanded Byram sullenly, "or do your day's stint on them there public roads."

McCloud dropped his hands into the pockets of his ragged shooting-jacket.

"You'd better leave or I'll settle you as I settled Billy Delany."

"You hit him with an ax; that's hom-mycide assault; he'll fix you, see if he don't!" said Byram.

"No," said McCloud, slowly; "I did not hit him with an ax. I had a ring on my finger when I hit him. I'm sorry it cut him."

"Oh, you'll be sorrier yet," cried Byram, turning away towards the road, where the game-warden was anxiously waiting for him.

"We'll run you outer town!" called back the warden, waddling down the road.

"Try it," replied McCloud, yawning.

II.

McCLOUD spent the afternoon lolling on the grass under the lilacs, listlessly watching the woodpeckers on the dead pines. Chewing a sprig of mint, he lay there sprawling, hands clasping the back of his well-shaped head, soothed by the cadence of the chirring locusts. When at length he had drifted pleasantly close to the verge of slumber a voice from the road below aroused him.

He listened lazily; again came the timid call; he arose, brushing his shabby coat mechanically.

Down the bramble-choked path he slouched, shouldering his wood-ax as a precaution. Passing around the rear of his house, he peered over the messed tangle of sweetbrier which supported the remains of a rotting fence, and he saw, down in the road below, a young

Lazarre, the Lost King

By Mary Hartwell Catherwood

Stooping, I saluted her hand with courtesy.

An extraordinary story of early perilous times and the life of a lost king, who for love and freedom's sake bravely abjured a royal inheritance.

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PRELUDE.

"MY NAME is Eagle," said the little girl.

The boy said nothing.

"My name is Eagle," she repeated. "Eagle de Ferrier. What is your name?"

Still the boy said nothing.

She looked at him surprised, but checked her displeasure. He was about 9 years old, while she was less than 7. By the dim light which sifted thru the top of St. Bat's church he did not appear sullen. He sat on the flagstones as if dazed and stupefied, facing a blacksmith's forge, which for many generations had occupied the north transept. A smith and some apprentices hammered measures that echoed with multiplied volume from the ancient Norman roof; and the crimson fire made a spot vivid as blood. A low stone arch, half walled up, and blackened by smoke, framed the top of the smithy, and thru this frame could be seen a bit of St. Bat's close, or yard, outside, upon which the doors stood open.

Tho the boy was dressed like a plain French citizen of that year, 1795, and his knee breeches betrayed shrunken calves, and his sleeves, wrists that were swollen as with tumors, Eagle accepted him as her equal. His fine wavy hair was of a chestnut color, and his hands and feet were small. His features were perfect as her own. But while life played unceasingly in vivid expression across her face, his muscles never moved. The hazel eyes, bluish around their iris rims, took cognizance of nothing. His left eyebrow had been parted by a cut now healed and forming its permanent scar.

"You understand me, don't you?" Eagle talked to him. "But you could not understand Sally Blake. She is an English girl. We live at her house until our ship sails, and I hope it will sail soon. Poor boy! Did the wicked mob in Paris hurt your arms?"

She soothed and patted his wrists, and he neither shrank in pain nor resented the endearment with male shyness.

Eagle edged closer to him on the stone pavement. She was amused by the blacksmith's arch, and interested in all the unusual life around her, and she leaned forward to find some response in his eyes. He was unconscious of his strange environment. The ancient church of St. Bartholomew the Great, or St. Bat's as it was called, in the heart of London, had long been a hived village. Not only were houses clustered thickly around its outside walls and the space of ground named its close; but the inside, degraded from its religious use, was parceled out to owners and householders. The nave only had been retained as a church bounded by massive pillars, which did not prevent Londoners from using it as a thorofare. Children of resident dissenters could and did hoot when it pleased them, during service, from an overhanging window in the choir. The Lady Chapel was a fringe-maker's shop. The smithy in the north transept had descended from father to son. The south transept, walled up to make a respectable dwelling, showed thru its open door the ghastly marble tomb of a crusader which the thrifty London housewife had turned into a parlor table. His marble feet and hands and upward staring countenance protruded from the midst of knickknacks.

Two women leaned out of the Norman arcades, separated only by a pillar, watching across the nave those little figures seated in front of the blacksmith's window. An atmosphere of comfort and thrift filled St. Bat's. It was the abode of labor and humble prosperity, not an asylum of poverty. Great worthies, indeed, such as John Milton, and nearer our own day, Washington Irving, did not disdain to live in St. Bartholomew's close. The two British matrons, therefore, spoke the prejudice of the better rather than the baser class.

"The little devils!" said one woman.

"They look innocent," remarked the other. "But these French do make my back crawl!"

"How long are they going to stay in St. Bat's?"

"The two men with the little girl and the servant intend to sail for America next week. The lad, and the man that brought him in—as dangerous looking a foreigner as ever I saw!—are like to prowl out any time. I saw them go into the smithy, and I went over to ask the smith's wife about them. She let two upper chambers to the creatures this morning."

"What ails the lad? He has the look of an idiot."

"Well, then, God knows what ails any of the crazy French! If they all broke out with boils like the heathen of Scripture, it would not surprise a Christian. As it is, they keep on beheading one another, day after day and month after month; and the time must come when none of them will be left—and a satisfaction that will be to respectable folks!"

"First the King, and then the Queen," mused one speaker. "And now news comes that the little Prince has died of bad treatment in his prison. England will not go into mourning for him as it did for his father, King Louis."

"And how do your foreigners behave themselves, Mrs. Blake?" inquired the neighbor.

"Like French emmy-grays, to be sure. I told Blake when he would have them to lodge in the house, that we are a respectable family. But he is master, and their lordships has money in their purses."

"French lordships!" exclaimed the neighbor. "Whether they calls themselves counts or markises, what's their nobility worth? Nothing!"

"The Markis de Ferrier," retorted Mrs. Blake, nettled by a liberty taken with her lodgers which she reserved for herself, "is a gentleman if he is an emmy-gray, and French."

"Well, then," soothed her gossip, "I was only thinking of them French that comes over, glad to teach their betters, or even to work with their hands for a crust."

Minute followed minute, and the great bell boomed out ten—the bell which had given signal for lighting the funeral piles of many a martyr, on Smithfield directly opposite the church. Organ music pealed; choir boys appeared from their robing-room beside the entrance, pacing two and two as they chanted. The celebrant stood in his place at the altar, and music rolled among the arches.

Eagle sprang up and led the silent boy away. Outside the church big fat-bellied pigeons were cooing about the tower or strutting and pecking on the ground. To kill one was a grave offense. The worst boy playing in the lane durst not lift a hand against them.

Very different game were Eagle and the other alien whom she led past the red-faced English children.

"Good day," she spoke pleasantly, feeling their antagonism. They answered her with a titter.

"Sally Blake is the only one I know," she explained in French, to her companion who moved feebly and stiffly behind her dancing step. "I cannot talk English to them, and besides, their manners are not good, for they are not like our peasants."

Sally Blake and a bare-kneed lad began to amble behind the foreigners, he taking his cue smartly and lolling out his tongue. The whole crowd set up a shout, and Eagle looked back. She wheeled and slapped the St. Bat's girl in the face.

That silent being whom she had taken under her care recoiled from the blow which the bare-kneed boy instantly gave him, and without defending himself or her, shrank down in an attitude of entreaty. She screamed with pain at this sight, which hurt worse than the hair-pulling of the mob around her. She fought like a panther in front of him.

Two men in the long narrow lane leading from Smithfield, interfered, and scattered her assailants.

You may pass up a step into the graveyard, which is separated by a wall from the lane. And tho nobody followed, the two men hurried Eagle and the boy into the graveyard and closed the gate.

It was not a large inclosure, and thread-like paths, grassy and ungraveled, wound among crowded graves. There was a very high outside wall, and the place insured such privacy as could not be had in St. Bat's church. Some crusted stones lay broad as gray doors on ancient graves; but the most stood up in irregular oblongs, white and lichened.

A catcall from the lane was the last shot of the battle. Eagle valiantly sleeked her disarrayed hair, the breast under her bodice still heaving and sobbing. The June sun illuminated a determined child of the gray-eyed type between white and brown, flushed with fullness of blood, quivering with her intensity of feeling.

"Who would say this was Mademoiselle de Ferrier!" observed the younger of the two men. Both were past mid-

dle age. The one whose hair showed the most gray took Eagle reproachfully by her hands; but the other stood laughing.

"My little daughter!"

"I did strike the English girl—and I would do it again, father!"

"She would do it again, Monsieur the Marquis," repeated the laugher.

"Were the children rude to you?"

"They mocked him, father." She pulled the boy from behind a gravestone where he crouched unmoving as a rabbit, and showed him to her guardians. "See how weak he is! Regard him—how he walks in a dream! Look at his swollen wrists—he cannot fight. And if you wish to make these English respect you, you have got to fight them!"

"Where is Ernestine? She should not have left you alone."

"Ernestine went to the shops to obey your orders, father."

The boy's dense inertia was undisturbed by what had so agonized the girl. He stood in the English sunshine gazing stupidly at her guardians.

"Who is this boy, Eagle?" exclaimed the younger man.

"He does not talk. He does not tell his name."

The younger man seized the elder's arm and whispered to him.

"No, Philippe, no!" the elder man answered. But they both approached the boy with a deference which surprised Eagle, and examined his scarred eyebrow and his wrists. Suddenly the Marquis dropped upon his knees and stripped the stockings down those meager legs. He kissed them, and the swollen ankles, sobbing like a woman. The boy seemed unconscious of this homage. Such exaggeration of her own tenderness made her ask:

"What ails my father, Cousin Philippe?"

Her Cousin Philippe glanced around the high walls and spoke cautiously.

"Who was the English girl at the head of your mob, Eagle?"

"Sally Blake."

"What would Sally Blake do if she saw the little King of France and Navarre ride into the church lane, filling it with his retinue, and heard the royal salute of twenty-one guns fired for him?"

"She would be afraid of him."

"But when he comes afoot, with that idiotic face, giving her such a good chance to bait him—how can she resist baiting him? Sally Blake is human."

"Cousin Philippe, this is not our Dauphin? Our Dauphin is dead! Both my father and you told me he died in the Temple prison nearly two weeks ago!"

The Marquis de Ferrier replaced the boy's stocking reverently and rose, backing away from him.

"There is your King, Eagle," the old courtier announced to his child. "Louis XVII., the son of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette, survives in this wreck. How he escaped from prison we do not know. Why he is here unrecognized in England, where his claim to the throne was duly acknowledged on the death of his father, we do not know. But we who love often seen the royal child cannot fail to identify him; brutalized as he is by the past horrible year of his life."

The boy stood unwinking before his three expatriated subjects. Two of them noted the traits of his house, even to his ears, which were full at top, and without any indentation at the bottom where they met the sweep of the jaw.

The Dauphin of France had been the most tortured victim of his country's Revolution. By a jailer who cut his eyebrow open with a blow, and knocked him down on the slightest pretext, the child had been forced to drown memory in fiery liquor, month after month. During six worse months, which might have been bettered by even such a jailer, he hid from the light in an airless dungeon, covered with rags which were never changed, and with filth and vermin which daily accumulated, having his food passed to him thru a slit in the door, hearing no human voice, seeing no human face, his joints swelling with poisoned blood, he had died in everything except physical vitality, and was taken out at last merely a breathing corpse. Then it was proclaimed that this corpse had ceased to breathe. The heir of a long line of kings was coffined and buried.

While the elder De Ferrier shed nervous tears, the younger looked on with eyes which had seen the drollery of the French Revolution.

"I wish I knew the man who has played this clever trick, and whether honest men or the rabble are behind it."

"Let us find him and embrace him!"

"I would rather embrace his prospects when the house of Bourbon comes again to the throne of France. Who is that fellow at the gate? He looks as if he had some business here."

The man came on among the tombstones, showing a full presence and prosperous air, suggesting good vintages, such as were never set out in the Smithfield alehouse. Instead of being smooth-shaven, he wore a very long moustache which dropped its ends below his chin.

A court painter, attached to his patrons, ought to have fallen into straits during the Revolution. Philippe exclaimed with astonishment——

"Why, it's Bellenger! Look at him!"

Bellenger took off his cap and made a deep reverence.

"My uncle is weeping over the dead English, Bellenger," said Philippe. "It always moves him to tears to see how few of them die."

"We can make no such complaint against Frenchmen in these days, monsieur," the court painter answered. "I see you have my young charge here, enjoying the gravestones with you—a pleasing change after the unmarked trenches of France. With your permission I will take him away."

"Have I the honor, Monsieur Bellenger, of saluting the man who brought the King out of prison?" the old man inquired.

Again Bellenger made the Marquis a deep reverence, which modestly disclaimed any exploit.

"When was this done? Who were your helpers? Where are you taking him?"

Bellenger lifted his eyebrows at the fanatical royalist.

"I wish I had had a hand in it!" spoke Philippe de Ferrier.

"I am taking this boy to America, Monsieur the Marquis," the painter quietly answered.

"But why not to one of his royal uncles?"

"His royal uncles," repeated Bellenger.

"Pardon, Monsieur the Marquis, but did I say he had any royal uncles?"

"Come!" spoke Philippe de Ferrier. "No jokes with us, Bellenger. Honest men of every degree should stand together in these times."

Eagle sat down on a flat gravestone, and looked at the boy who seemed to be an object of dispute between the men of her family and the other man. He neither saw nor heard what passed. She said to herself——

"It would make no difference to me! It is the same, whether he is the King or not."

Bellenger's eyes half closed their lids as if for protection from the sun.

"Monsieur de Ferrier may rest assured that I am not at present occupied with jokes. I will again ask permission to take my charge away."

"You may not go up until you have answered some questions."

"That I will do as far I am permitted."

"Do Monsieur and his brother know that the King is here?" inquired the elder De Ferrier, taking the lead.

"What reason have you to believe," responded Bellenger, "that the Count de Provence and the Count d'Artois have any interest in this boy?"

Philippe laughed, and kicked the turf. "We have seen him many a time at Versailles, my friend. You are very mysterious."

"Have his enemies or his friends set him free?" demanded the old Frenchman.

"That," said Bellenger, "I may not tell."

"Does Monsieur know that you are going to take him to America?"

"That I may not tell."

"When do you sail, and in what vessel?"

"These matters, also, I may not tell."

"This man is a kidnaper!" the old noble cried, bringing out his sword with a hiss. But Philippe held his arm.

"Among things permitted to you," said Philippe, "perhaps you will take oath the boy is not a Bourbon?"

Bellenger shrugged, and waved his hands.

"You admit that he is?"

"I admit nothing, monsieur. These are days in which we save our heads as well as we can, and admit nothing."

"If we had never seen the Dauphin we should infer that this is no common child you are carrying away so secretly, bound to many pledges. A man like you, trusted with an important mission, naturally magnifies it. You refuse to let us know anything about this affair?"

"I am simply obeying orders, monsieur," said Bellenger, humbly. "It is not my affair."

"You are better dressed, more at ease with the world than any other refugee I have seen since we came out of France. Somebody who has money is paying to have the child placed in safety. Very well. Any country but his own is a good country for him now. My uncle and I will not interfere. We do not understand. But liberty of any kind is better than imprisonment and death. You can of course evade us, but I give you notice I shall look for this boy in America, and if you take him elsewhere I shall probably find it out."

"America is a large country," said Bellenger, smiling.

He took the boy by the hand, and made his adieus. The old De Ferrier deeply saluted the boy and slightly saluted his guardian. The other De Ferrier nodded.

"We are making a mistake, Philippe!" said the uncle.

"Let him go," said the nephew. "He will probably slip away at once out of St. Bartholomew's. We can do nothing until we are certain of the powers behind him. Endless disaster to the child himself might result from our interference. If France were ready now to take back her King, would she accept an imbecile?"

The old De Ferrier groaned aloud.

"Bellenger is not a bad man," added Philippe.

Eagle watched her playmate until the closing gate hid him from sight. She remembered having once implored her nurse for a small plaster image displayed in a shop. It could not speak, nor move, nor love her in return. But she cried secretly all night to have it in her arms, ashamed of the unreasonable desire, but conscious that she could not be appeased by anything else. That plaster image denied to her symbolized the strongest passion of her life.

The pigeons wheeled around St. Bat's tower, or strutted burnished on the wall. The bell, which she had forgotten since sitting with the boy in front of the blacksmith shop, again boomed out its record of time; tho it seemed to Eagle that a long, lonesome period like eternity had begun.

CHAPTER I.

I REMEMBER poising naked upon a rock, ready to dive into Lake George. This memory stands at the end of a diminishing vista; the extreme point of coherent recollection. My body and muscular limbs reflected in the water filled me with savage pride

I knew, as the beast knows its herd, that my mother Marianne was hanging the pot over the fire pit in the center of our lodge; the children were playing with other papooses, and my father was hunting down the lake. The hunting and fishing were good, and we had plenty of meat. Skenedonk, whom I considered a person belonging to myself, was stripping more slowly on the rock beside me. We were heated with wood ranging Aboriginal life, primeval and vigor-giving, lay behind me when I plunged expecting to strike out under the delicious forest shadow.

When I came up the sun had vanished, the woods and their shadow were gone. So were the Indian children playing on the shore, and the shore with them. My mother Marianne might still be hanging her pot in the lodge. But all the hunting lodges of our people were as completely lost as if I had entered another world.

My head was bandaged, as I discovered when I turned it to look around. The walls were not the log walls of our lodge, chinked with moss and topped by a bark roof. On the contrary they were grander than the inside of St. Regis church where I took my first communion, tho that was built of stone. These walls were paneled, as I learned afterward to call that noble finishing, and ornamented with pictures, and crystal sockets for candles. The use of the crystal sockets was evident, for one shaded wax light burned near me. The ceiling was not composed of wooden beams like some Canadian houses, but divided into panels also, reflecting the light with a dark rosy shining. Lace work finer than a priest's white garments fluttered at the windows.

I had dived early in the afternoon, and it was night. Instead of finding myself still stripped for swimming, I had a loose robe around me, and a coverlet drawn up to my armpits. The couch under me was by no means of hemlock twigs and skins, like our bunks at home; but soft and rich. I wondered if I had died and gone to heaven; and just then the Virgin moved past my head and stood looking down at me. I started to jump out of a window, but felt so little power to move that I only twitched, and pretended to be asleep, and watched her as we sighted game, with eyes nearly shut. She had a poppet of a child on one arm that sat up instead of leaning against her shoulder, and looked at me, too. The poppet had a cap on its head, and was dressed in lace, and she wore a white dress that let her neck and arms out, but covered her to the ground. This was remarkable, as the Indian women covered their necks and arms, and wore their petticoats short. I could see this image breathe, which was a marvel, and the color moving under her white skin. Her eyes seemed to go thru you and search all the veins, sending a shiver of pleasure down your back.

Now I knew after the first start that she was a living girl holding a living baby, and when my father, Thomas Williams, appeared at the door of the room, it was certain I could not be in heaven. It came over me in a flash that I myself was changed. In spite of the bandages my head was as clear as if all its faculties were washed and newly arranged. I could look back into my life and perceive things that I had only sensed as a dumb brute. A fish thawed out after being frozen, and reanimated thru every sparkling scale and tremulous fin, could not have felt its resurrection more keenly. My broken head gave me no trouble at all.

The girl and baby disappeared as soon as I saw my father; which was not surprising, for he could not be called a prepossessing half-breed. His lower lip protruded and hung sullenly. He had heavy brows and a shaggy thatch of hair. Our St. Regis Iroquois kept to the buckskins, tho they often had hunting shirts of red flannel; and my father's buckskins were very dirty.

A little man, that I did not know was in the room, shuffled across the floor to keep my father from entering. Around the base of his head he had a thin curtain of hair scarcely reaching his shoulders. His nose pointed upward. Its tip was the shape of a candle extinguisher. He wore horn spectacles, and knee breeches, waistcoat and coat of black like the ink which fades to brown in a drying inkhorn. He put his hands together and took them apart uncertainly, and shot out his lip and frowned, as if he had an universal grudge and dared not vent it.

He said something in a language I did not understand, and my father made no answer. Then he began a kind of Anglo-French, worse than the patois we used at St. Regis when we did not speak Iroquois. I made out the talk between the two, understanding each without hesitation.

"Sir, who are you?"

"The chief, Thomas Williams," answered my father.

"Pardon me, sir; but you are unmistakably an Indian."

"Iroquois chief," said my father. "Mohawk."

"That being the case, what authority have you for calling yourself Thomas Williams?" challenged the little man.

"Thomas Williams is my name."

"Impossible, sir! Skenedonk, the Oneida, does not assume so much. He lays no claim to William Jones or John Smith, or some other honest British name."

The chief maintained silent dignity.

"Come, sir, let me have your Indian name! I can hear it if I cannot repeat it."

Silently contemptuous, my father turned toward me.

"Stop, sir!" the man in the horn spectacles cried. "What do you want?"

"I want my boy."

"Your boy? This lad is white."

"My grandmother was white," condescended the chief. "A white prisoner from Deerfield. Eunice Williams."

"I see, sir. You get your Williams from the Yankees. And is this lad's mother white, too?"

"No. Mohawk."

"Why, man, his body is like milk! He is no son of yours."

The chief marched toward me.

"Let him alone! If you try to drag him out of the manor I will appeal to the authority of Le Ray de Chaumont."

My father spoke to me with sharp authority——

"Lazarre!"

"What do you call him?" the little man inquired, ambling beside the chief.

"Eleazar Williams is his name. But in the lodges at St. Regis, everywhere, it is Lazarre."

"How old is he?"

"About 18 years."

"Well, Thomas Williams," said my fretful guardian, his antagonism melting to patronage, "I will tell you who I am, and then you can feel no anxiety. I am Dr. Chastury, physician to the Count de Chaumont. The lad cut his head open on a rock, diving in the lake, and has remained unconscious ever since. This is partly due to an opiate I have administered to insure complete quiet; and he will not awake for several hours yet. He received the best surgery as soon as he was brought here and placed in my hands by the educated Oneida, Skenedonk."

"I was not near the lodge," said my father. "I was down the lake fishing."

"I have bled him once, and shall bleed him again; tho the rock did that pretty effectually. But these strapping young creatures need frequent bloodletting."

The chief gave him no thanks, and I myself resolved to knock the little Doc-

LEDGER readers will find next week's issue a real treat. "Folly's Fatal Legacy" will be one of its big features, a powerful story of a millionaire's son and a poor but beautiful girl. Read what befell them and how it all ended. The first of a new series of remarkable detective stories will appear, entitled, "Scarlett Radford, Detective." Guess what became of "The Missing Bank Clerk," and let the spell of the great North Woods thrill you in "The Long Trail's End." Laugh at the "Strenuous Animals" and "Down on the Farm," the happenings of Halloween, and a lot of other good things. We guarantee that you will get a great deal more than a nickel's worth.

tor down, if he came near me with a knife.

"In the absence of Count de Chaumont, Thomas," he proceeded, "I may direct you to go and knock on the cook's door, and ask for something to eat before you go home."

"I stay here," responded my father.

"There is not the slightest need of anybody's watching beside the lad tonight. I was about to retire when you were permitted to enter. He is sleeping like an infant."

"He belongs to me," the chief said.

Dr. Chantry jumped at the chief in rage.

"For God's sake, shut up and go about your business!"

It was like one of the little dogs in our camp snapping at the patriarch of them all, and recoiling from a growl. My father's hand was on his hunting knife; but he grunted and said nothing. Dr. Chantry himself withdrew from the room and left the Indian in possession. Weak as I was I felt my insides quake with laughter. My very first observation of the whimsical being tickled me with a kind of foreknowledge of all his weak fretfulness.

My father sat down on the floor at the foot of my couch, where the wax light threw his shadow, exaggerating its unmoving profile. I noticed one of the chairs he disdained as useless; tho when eating or drinking with white men he sat at table with them. The chair I saw was one that I faintly recognized, as furniture of some previous experience, slim-legged, gracefully curved, and brocaded. Brocaded was the word. I studied it until I fell asleep.

The sun, shining thru the protected windows, instead of glaring into our lodge door, showed my father sitting in the same position when I woke, and Skenedonk at my side. I liked the educated Iroquois. He was about ten years my senior. He had been taken to France when a stripling, and was much bound to the whites, tho living with his own tribe. Skenedonk had the mildest brown eyes I ever saw outside a deer's head. He was a bald Indian with one small scalp lock. But the just and perfect dome to which his close-lying ears were attached needed no hair to adorn it. You felt glad that nothing shaded the benevolence of his all-over forehead. By contrast he emphasized the sullenness of my father; yet when occasion had pressed there never was a readier hand than Skenedonk's to kill.

I tossed the cover back to spring out of bed with a whoop. But a woman in a high cap with ribbons hanging down to her heels, and a dress short enough to show her shoes, stepped into the room and made a courtesy. Her face fell easily into creases when she talked, and gave you the feeling that it was too soft of flesh. Indeed, her eyes were cushioned all around. She spoke and Skenedonk answered her in French. The meaning of every word broke thru my mind as fire breaks thru paper.

"Madame de Ferrier sent me to inquire how the young gentleman is."

Skenedonk lessened the rims around his eyes. My father grunted.

"Did Madame de Ferrier say 'the young gentleman?'" Skenedonk inquired.

"I was told to inquire. I am her servant Ernestine," said the woman, her face creased with the anxiety of responding to questions.

"Tell Madame de Ferrier that the young gentleman is much better, and will go home to the lodges today."

"She said I was to wait upon him, and give him his breakfast under the Doctor's direction."

"Say with thanks to Madame de Ferrier that I wait upon him."

Ernestine again courtesied, and made way for Dr. Chantry. He came in quite good-natured, and greeted all of us, his inferiors, with a humility I then thought touching, but learned afterward to distrust. My head already felt the healing blood, and I was ravenous for food. He bound it with fresh bandages, and opened a box full of glittering knives, taking out a small sheath. From this he made a point of steel spring like lightning.

"We will bring the wholesome lancet again into play, my lad," said Dr. Chantry. I waited in uncertainty with my feet on the floor and my hands on the side of the couch, while he carefully removed coat and waistcoat and turned up his sleeves.

"Ernestine, bring the basin," he commanded.

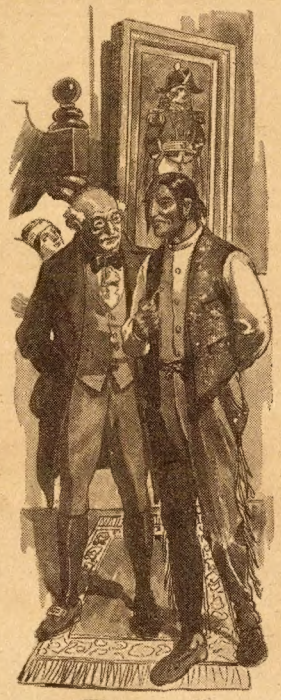
My father may have thought the Doctor was about to inflict a vicarious puncture on himself. Skenedonk, with respect for civilized surgery, waited. I did not wait. The operator bared me to the elbow and showed a piece of plaster already sticking on my arm. The conviction of being outraged in my person came upon me mightily, and snatching the wholesome lancet I turned its spring upon the Doctor. He yelled. I leaped thru the door like a deer, and ran barefooted, the loose robe curling above my knees. I had the fleetest foot among the Indian racers, and was going to throw the garment away for the pure joy of feeling the air slide past my naked body, when I saw the girl and poppet baby who had looked at me during my first consciousness. They were sitting on a blanket under the trees of De Chaumont's park, which deepened into wilderness.

The baby put up a lip, and the girl surrounded it with her arm, dividing her sympathy with me. I must have been a charming object. Tho ravenous for food and broken-headed, I forgot my state, and turned off the road of escape to stare at her like a tame deer.

She lowered her eyes wisely, and I got near enough without taking fright to see a book spread open on the blanket showing two illuminated pages. Something parted in me. I saw my mother, as I had seen her in some past life:—not Marianne the Mohawk, wife of Thomas Williams, but a fair oval-faced mother with arched brows. I saw even her pointed waist and puffed skirts, and the lace around her open neck. She held the book in her hands and read to me from it.

I dropped on my knees and stretched my arms above my head, crying aloud as women cry with gasps and chokings in sudden bereavement. Nebulous memories twisted all around me and I could grasp nothing. I raged for what had been mine—for some high estate out of which I had fallen into degradation. I clawed the ground in what must have seemed convulsions to the girl. Her poppet cried and she hushed it.

"Give me my mother's book!" I strangled out of the depths of my



"Who are you?"

throat; and repeated, as if torn by a devil—"Give me my mother's book!"

She blanched so white that her lips looked seared, and instead of disputing my claim, or inquiring about my mother, or telling me to begone, she was up on her feet. Taking her dress in her finger-tips and settling back almost to the ground in the most beautiful obeisance I ever saw, she said——

"Sire!"

Neither in Iroquois nor in Iroquois-French had such a name been given to me before. I had a long title signifying Tree-Cutter, which belonged to every chief of our family. But that word—"Sire!"—and her deep reverence seemed to atone in some way for what I had lost. I sat up, quieting myself, still moved as water heaves. She put the missal on the lap of my single garment, and drew back a step, formally standing. My scarred ankles, at which the Indian children used to point, were exposed to her gaze, for I never would sit on them after the manner of the tribe. There was no restraining the tears that ran down my face. She might have mocked me, but she remained white and quiet; while I sat as dumb as a dog, and as full of unuttered speech. Looking back now I can see what passionate necessity shook me with throbs to be the equal of her who had received me as a superior.

De Chaumont's manor house, facing a winding avenue, could be seen from where we were. It was of stone, built to inclose a court on three sides, in the form that I afterward recognized as that of French palaces. There were a great many flowers in the court, and vines covered the ends of the wings. All those misty half-remembered hunting seasons that I had spent on Lake George were not without some knowledge. The chimneys and roofs of Le Ray de Chaumont's manor often looked at me thru trees as I steered my boat among the islands. He was a great land owner, having more than three hundred thousand acres of wilderness. And he was friendly with both Indians and Americans. His figure did not mean much to me when I saw it, being merely a type of wealth, and wealth extends little power into the wilderness.

The poppet or a child climbed up and held to the girl's dress. She stooped over and kissed it, saying, "Sit down, Paul." The toy human being seemed full of intelligence, and after the first protest examined me fearlessly, with enchanting smiles about the mouth and eyes. I noticed even then an upward curling of the mouth corners and a kind of magic in the liquid blue gaze, of which Paul might never be conscious, but which would work on every beholder.

That a child should be the appendage of such a young creature as the girl, surprised me no more than if it had been a fawn or a dog. In the vivid moments of my first rousing to life I had seen her with Paul in her arms; and he remained part of her.

We heard a rush of horses up the avenue, and out of the woods came Le Ray de Chaumont and his groom, the wealthy land owner equipped in gentleman's riding dress from his spurs to his hat. He made a fine show, whip hand on his hip and back erect as a pine tree. He was a man in middle life, but he reined up and dismounted with the swift agility of a youth, and sent his horse away with the groom, as soon as he saw the girl run across the grass to meet him. Taking her hand he bowed over it and kissed it with pleasing ceremony, of which I approved. An Iroquois chief in full council had not better manners than Le Ray de Chaumont.

Paul and I waited to see what was going to happen, for the two came toward us, the girl talking rapidly to the man. I saw my father and Skenedonk and the Doctor also coming from the house, and they readily spied me sitting tame as a rabbit near the baby.

You never can perceive yourself what figure you are making in the world: for when you think you are the admired of all eyes you may be displaying a fool; and when life seems prostrated in you it may be that you show as a monument on the heights. But I could not be mistaken in De Chaumont's opinion of me. He pointed his whip handle at me, exclaiming——

"What!—that scarecrow, madame?"

CHAPTER II.

BUT look at him," she urged.

"I recognize first," said De Chaumont as he sauntered, "an old robe of my own."

"His mother was reduced to coarse serge, I have been told."

"You speak of an august lady, my dear Eagle. But this is Chief Williams' boy. He has been at the hunting lodges every summer since I came into the wilderness. There you see his father, the half-breed Mohawk."

"I saw the Dauphin in London, Count. I was a little child, but his scarred ankles and wrists and forehead are not easily forgotten."

"The Dauphin died in the Temple, Eagle."

"My father and Philippe never believed that."

"Your father and Philippe were very mad royalists."

"And you have gone over to Bonaparte. They said that boy had all the traits of the Bourbons, even to the shaping of his ear."

"A Bourbon ear hears nothing but Bonaparte in these days," said De Chaumont. "How do you know this is the same boy you saw in London?"

"Last night while he was lying unconscious, after Dr. Chantry had bandaged his head and bled him, I went in to see if I might be of use. He was like some one I had seen. But I did not know him until a moment ago. He ran out of the house like a wild Indian. Then he saw us sitting here, and came and fell down on his knees at sight of that missal. I saw his scars. He claimed the book as his mother's—and you know, Count, it was his mother's!"

"My dear child, whenever an Indian wants a present he dreams that you give it to him, or he claims it. Chief Williams' boy wanted your valuable illuminated book. I only wonder he had the taste. The rags on your hands are more to an Indian's liking."

"But he is not an Indian, Count. He is as white as we are."

"That signifies nothing. Plenty of white children have been brought up among the tribes. Chief Williams' grandmother, I have heard, was a Yankee woman."

Not one word of their rapid talk escaped an ear trained to faintest noises in the woods. I felt like a tree, well set up and sound, but rooted and voiceless in my ignorant helplessness before the two so frankly considering me.

My father stopped when he saw Madame de Ferrier, and called to me in Iroquois. It was plain that he and Dr. Chantry disagreed. Skenedonk, put out of countenance by my behavior, and the stubbornness of the chief, looked ready to lay his hand upon his mouth in sign of being confounded before white men; for his learning had altered none of his inherited instincts.

But as for me, I was as De Chaumont had said, Chief Williams' boy, faint from bloodletting and twenty-four hours' fasting; and the father's command reminded me of the mother's dinner pot. I stood up erect and drew the flowered silk robe around me. It would have been easier to walk on burning coals, but I felt obliged to return the book to Madame de Ferrier. She would not take it. I closed her grasp upon it, and stooping, saluted her hand with courtesy as De Chaumont had done. If he had roared I must have done this devoir. But all he did was to widen his eyes and strike his leg with his riding whip.

My father and I seldom talked. An Indian boy who lives in water and forest all summer and on snowshoes all winter, finds talk enough in the natural world without falling back upon his family. Dignified manners were not lacking among my elders, but speech had seemed of little account to me before this day.

The chief paddled and I sat naked in our canoe;—for we left the flowered robe with a horse-boy at the stables;—the sun warm upon my skin, the lake's blue glamour affecting me like enchantment.

Neither love nor aversion was associated with my father. I took my head between my hands and tried to remember a face that was associated with aversion.

"Father," I inquired, "was anybody ever very cruel to me?"

He looked startled, but spoke harshly.

"What have you got in your head? These white people have been making a fool of you."

"I remember better today than I ever remembered before. I am different. I was a child; but today manhood has come. Father, what is a dauphin?"

The chief made no answer.

"What is a temple? Is it a church, like ours at St. Regis?"

"Ask the priest."

"Do you know what Bourbon is, father—particularly a Bourbon ear?"

"Nothing that concerns you."

"But how could I have a Bourbon ear if it didn't concern me?"

"Who said you had such an ear?"

"Madame de Ferrier."

The chief grunted.

"At least she told De Chaumont," I repeated exactly, "I was the boy she saw in London, that her father said had all the traits of the Bourbons. Where is London?"

The chief paddled without replying. Finding him so ignorant on all points of the conversation, or so determined to put me down, I gazed a while at our shadow gliding in the water, and then began again.

"Father, do you happen to know who Bonaparte is?"

This time he answered.

"Bonaparte is a great soldier."

"Is he a white man or an Indian?"

"He is a Frenchman."

I meditated on the Frenchmen I dimly remembered about St. Regis. They were undersized fellows, very apt to weep when their emotions were stirred. I could whip them all.

"Did he ever come to St. Regis?"

The chief again grunted.

"Does France come to St. Regis?" he retorted with an impatient question.

"What is France, father?"

"A country."

"Shall we ever go there to hunt?"

"Shall we ever go to the other side of the sunrise to hunt? France is the other side of the sunrise. Talk to the squaws."

Tho rebuked, I determined to do it if any information could be got out of them. The desire to know things was consuming. I had the belated feeling of one who waked to consciousness late in life and found the world had run away from him. The camp seemed strange, as if I had been gone many years, but every object was so wonderfully distinct.

My mother Marianne fed me, and when I lay down dizzy in the bunk, covered me. The family must have thought it was natural sleep. But it was a fainting collapse, which took me more than once afterward as suddenly as a blow on the head, when my faculties were most needed. Whether this was caused by the plunge upon the rock or the dim life from which I had emerged, I do not know. One moment I saw the children, and mothers from the neighboring lodges, more interested than my own mother; our smoky rafters, and the fire pit in the center of unfloored ground; my clothes hanging over the bunk, and even a dog with his nose in the kettle. And then, as it had been the night before, I waked after many hours.

By that time the family breathing sawed the air within the walls, and a fine starlight showed thru the open door, for we had no window. Outside the oak trees were pattering their leaves like rain, reminding me of our cool spring in the woods. My bandaged head was very hot, in that dark lair of animals where the log bunks stretched and deepened shadow.

If Skenedonk had been there I would have asked him to bring me water, with confidence in his natural service. The chief's family was a large one, but not

one of my brothers and sisters seemed as near to me as Skenedonk. The apathy of fraternal attachment never caused me any pain. The whole tribe was held dear.

I stripped off Dr. Chantry's undurable bandages, and put on my clothes, for there were brambles along the path. The lodges and the dogs were still, and I crept like a hunter after game, to avoid waking them. Our village was an irregular camp, each house standing where its owner had pleased to build it on the lake shore. Behind it the blackness of wooded wilderness seemed to stretch to the end of the world.

The spring made a distinct tinkle in the rush of low sound thru the forest. A rank night sweetness of mints and other lush plants mixed its spirit with the body of leaf earth. I felt happy in being a part of all this, and the woods were to me as safe as the bedchamber of a mother. It was fine to wallow, damming the span of escaping water with my fevered head. Physical relief and delicious shuddering coolness ran thru me.

From that wet pillow I looked up and thought again of what had happened that day, and particularly of the girl whom De Chaumont had called Madame de Ferrier and Eagle. Every word that she had spoken passed again before my mind. Possibilities that I had never imagined rayed out from my recumbent body as from the hub of a vast wheel. I was white. I was not an Indian. I had a Bourbon ear. She believed I was a dauphin. What was a dauphin, that she should make such a deep obeisance to it? My father, the chief, recommending me to the squaws, had appeared to know nothing about it.

All that she believed De Chaumont denied. The rich book which stirred such torment in me—"you know it was his mother's!" she said—De Chaumont thought I merely coveted. I can see now that the crude half-savage boy wallowing in the spring stream, set that woman as high as the highest star above his head, and made her the hope and symbol of his possible best.

A woman's long cry, like the appeal of that one on whom he meditated, echoed thru the woods and startled him out of his wallow.

CHAPTER III.

I SAT up with the water trickling down my back. The cry was repeated, out of the west.

I knew the woods, but night alters the most familiar places. It was so dark in vaults and tunnels of trees and thickets that I might have burrowed thru the ground almost as easily as thrash a path. The million scarcely audible noises that fill a forest, surrounded me, and twigs not broken by me cracked or shook. Still I made directly toward the woman's voice which guided me more plainly; but left off running as my ear detected that she was only in perplexity. She called at intervals, imperatively but not in continuous screams. She was a white woman; for no squaw would publish her discomfort. A squaw if lost would camp sensibly on a bed of leaves, and find her way back to the village in the morning. The wilderness was full of dangers, but when you are elder brother to the bear and the wild-cat you learn their habits, and avoid or outwit them.

Climbing over rocks and windfalls I came against a solid log wall and heard the woman talking in a very pretty chatter the other side of it. She only left off talking to call for help, and left off calling for help to scold and laugh again. There was a man imprisoned with her, and they were speaking English, a language I did not then understand. But what had happened to them was very plain. They had wandered into a pen built by hunters to trap bears, and could not find the bush-masked and winding opening, but were traveling around the walls. It was lucky for them, that a bear had not arrived first, tho in that case their horses must have smelled him. I heard the beasts shaking their bridles.

I found my way to the opening, and whistled. At once the woman ceased her chatter and drew in her breath, and they both asked me a question which was no interpretation. I told them where they were, and the woman began talking at once in my own tongue and spoke it as well as I could myself.

"In a bear pen? George, he says we are in a bear pen! Take us out, dear chief, before the bear family arrive home from their hall. I don't know whether you are a chief or not, but most Indians are. My nurse was a chief's daughter. Where are you? I can't see anything but chunks of blackness."

I took her horse by the bridle and led him, and so got both the riders outside. They had no tinder, and neither had I; and all of us groped for the way by which they had come to the bear pen. The young man spurred his horse in every direction, and turned back unable to get thru.

Tho we could not see one another, I knew that both the adventurers were young, and that they expected to be called to severe account for the lawless act they were committing. The girl, talking English, or French, or Mohawk almost in one breath, took the blame upon herself and made light of the boy's self-reproaches.

She laughed and said—"My father thinks I am with Miss Chantry, and Miss Chantry thinks I am with my father. He will blame her for letting me ride with George Croghan to meet him, and lose the way and so get into the bear pen. And she will blame my father, and your father Annabel will let the Count de Chaumont and Miss Chantry fight it out. It is not an affair for youth to meddle with, George."

Having her for interpreter the boy and I consulted. I might have led him back to our hunting camp, but it was a hard road for a woman and an impossible one for horses. There was no inhabited house nearer than De Chaumont's own. He decided they must return to the road by which they had come into the bear pen, and gladly accepted my offer to go with him; dismounting and leading Annabel de Chaumont's horse while I led his. We passed over rotten logs and thru black tangles, the girl bending to her saddlebow, unwearied and full of laughter. It was plain that she could not find any outlet, and falling behind with the cumbered horse he let me guide the party.

I do not know by what instinct I felt my way, conscious of slipping between the wild citizens of that vast town of trees; but we finally reached a clearing and saw across the open space a lighted cabin. Its sashless windows and defective chinks were gilded with the yellow light that comes from a glowing hearth.

"I know this place!" exclaimed Annabel. "It is where the Saint-Michels used to live before they went to my father's settlement at Le Rayville. Look at the house! Nobody lives there. It must be full of witches."

Violin music testified that the witches were merry. We halted, and the horses neighed and were answered by others of their kind.

"George Croghan's grandmother was struck by a witch ball. And here her grandson stands, too tired to run. But perhaps there aren't any witches in the house. I don't believe wicked things would be allowed to enter it. The Saint-Michels were so pious, and ugly, and resigned to the poverty of refugees. Their society was so good for me, my mother, when she was alive, made me venerate them until I hated them. Holy Sophie died and went to heaven. I shall never see her again. She was, indeed, excellent. This can't be a nest of witches. George, why don't you go and knock on the door?"

It was not necessary, for the door opened and a man appeared, holding his violin by the neck. He stepped out to look around the cabin at some horses fastened there, and saw and hailed us.

I was not sorry to be allowed to enter, for I was tired to exhaustion, and sat down on the floor near the fire. The man looked at me suspiciously, tho he was ruddy and good-natured. But he bent quite over before De Chaumont's daughter, and made a flourish with his hand in receiving young Croghan. There were in the cabin with him two women and two little girls; and a Canadian servant like a fat brown bear came from the rear of the house to look at us and then went back to the horses.

All the women began to speak, but Annabel de Chaumont could talk faster than the four others combined, so they knew our plight before we learned that there were three Dutch trunk families, who were going into the West to find settlement and had made the house their camp for one night. The Dutch maid, dark and round-eyed, and the flaxen little Grignon, had respect for their elders and held their tongues while Madame Grignon and Madame Grignon spoke, but Annabel de Chaumont was like a grove of sparrows. The world seemed swarming with young maids. The travelers were mere children, while the Count's daughter was startling as an angel. Her clothing fitted her body like an exquisite sheath. I do not know what it was, but it made her look as slim as a dragon fly. Her white and rose pink face had a high arched nose, and was proud and saucy. She wore her hair beaten out like mist, with rich curly shreds hanging in front of her ears to her shoulders. She shook her head to set her hat straight, and turned her eyes in rapid smiling sweeps. I knew as well then as I ever did afterward that she was bound to befool every man that came near her.

There were only two benches in the cabin, but it was floored and better made than our hunting lodges. The temporary inmates and their guests sat down in a long row before the fire. I was glad to make a pillow of a saddle near the wall, and watch their backs, as an outsider. Mademoiselle de Chaumont absorbed all eyes and all attention. She told about a ball, to which she had ridden with her governess and servants a three days' journey, and from which all the dancers were riding back a three days' journey to join in another ball at her father's house. With the hospitality which made Le Ray de Chaumont's manor the palace of the wilderness as it existed then, she invited the hosts who sheltered her for the night, to come to the ball and stay all summer. And they lamented that they could not accept the invitation, being obliged to hurry on to Albany, where a larger party would give them escort on a long westward journey.

The head of the house took up his bow, as if musing on the ball, and Annabel de Chaumont wriggled her feet faster and faster. Tireless as thistledown that rolls here and there at the will of the wind, up she sprang and began to dance. The children watched her spellbound. None of us had ever seen the many figures thru which she passed, or such wonderful dancing. The chimney was built of logs and clay, forming terraces. As if it was no longer possible for her to stay on the ground, she darted from the bench-end to the lowest log, and stepped on up as fearlessly as a thing of air, until her head touched the roof. Monsieur Grignon played like mad, and the others clapped their hands. While she poised so I sat up to watch her, and she noticed me for the first time by firelight.

"Look at that boy—he has been hurt—the blood is running down his cheek!" she cried. "I thought he was an Indian—and he is white!"

She came down as lightly as she had gone up, and caused me to be haled against my will to the middle of a bench. I wanted the women to leave me alone, and told them my head had been broken two days before, and was nearly well. The mothers, too keen to wash and bandage to let me escape, opened a saddle pack and tore good linen.

George Croghan stood by the chimney, slim and tall and handsome. His head and face were long, his hair was of a sunny color, and his mouth corners were shrewd and good-natured. I liked him the moment I saw him. Younger in years than I, he was older in wit and manly carriage. While he looked on it was hard to have Madame Tank seize my head in her hands and examine my eyebrow. She next took my wrists, and not satisfied, stripped up the right sleeve and exposed a crescent-shaped scar, one of the rare vaccination marks of those days. I did not know what it was. Her animated dark eyes drew the brows together so that a pucker came between them. I looked at Croghan, and wanted to exclaim—"Help yourself! Anybody may handle me!"

"Ursule Grignon!" she said sharply, and Madame Grignon answered,

"Eh, what, Katarina?"

"This is the boy."

"But what boy?"

"The boy I saw on the ship."

"The one who was sent to America—"

Madame Tank put up her hand, and the other stopped.

"But that was a child," Madame Grignon then objected.

"Nine years ago. He would be about 18 now."

"How old are you?" they both put to me.

Remembering what my father had told Dr. Chantry, I was obliged to own that I was about 18. Annabel de Chaumont sat on the lowest log of the chimney with her feet on a bench, and her chin in her hand, interested to the point of silence. Something in her eyes made it very gallingto be overhauled and have my blemishes enumerated before her and Croghan. What had uplifted me to Madame de Ferrier's recognition now mocked, and I found it hard to submit. It would not go well with the next stranger who declared he knew me by my scars.

"What do they call you in this country?" inquired Madame Tank.

I said my name was Lazarre Williams.

"It is not!" she said in an undertone, shaking her head.

I made bold to ask with some warmth what my name was then, and she whispered—"Poor child!"

It seemed that I was to be pitied in any case. In dim self-knowledge I saw that the core of my resentment was her treating me with commiseration. Madame de Ferrier had not treated me so.

"You live among the Indians?" Madame Tank resumed.

The fact was evident.

"Have they been kind to you?"

I said they had.

Madame Tank's young daughter edged near her and inquired in a whisper:

"Who is he, mother?"

"Hush!" answered Madame Tank.

The head of the party laid down his violin and bow, and explained to us:

"Madame Tank was maid of honor to the Queen of Holland, before reverses overtook her. She knows many secrets."

"But she might at least tell us," coaxed Annabel, "if this Mohawk is a Dutchman."

Madame Tank said nothing.

"What could happen in the court of Holland? The Dutch are slow coaches. I saw the Van Rensselaers once, near Albany, riding in a wagon with straw under their feet, on common chairs, the old Patroon himself driving. This boy is some offscouring."

"He outranks you, mademoiselle," retorted Madame Tank.

"That's what I wanted to find out," said Annabel.

I kept an eye on Croghan to see what he thought of all this woman-talk. For you cannot help being more dominated by the opinion of your contemporaries than by that of the forerunning or following generation. He held his countenance in excellent command, and did not meddle even by a word. You could be sure, however, that he was no credulous person who accepted everything that was said to him.

Madame Tank looked into the reddened fireplace, and began to speak, but hesitated. The whole thing was weird, like a dream resulting from the cut on my head; the strange white faces; the camp stuff and saddlebags unpacked from horses; the light on the coarse floor; the children listening as to a ghost story; Mademoiselle de Chaumont presiding over it all. The cabin had an arched roof and no loft. The top was full of shadows.

"If you are the boy I take you to be," Madame Tank finally said, sinking her voice, "you may find you have enemies."

"If I am the boy you take me to be, madame, who am I?"

She shook her head.

"I wish I had not spoken at all. To tell you anything more would only plunge you into trouble. You are better off to be as you are, than to know the truth and suffer from it. Besides, I may be mistaken. And I am certainly too helpless myself to be of any use to you. This much I will say: when you are older, if things occur that make it necessary for you to know what I know, send a letter to me, and I will write it down."

With delicacy Monsieur Grignon began to play a whisper of a tune on his violin. I did not know what she meant by a letter, tho I understood her. Madame Tank spoke the language as well as anybody. I thought then, as idiom after idiom rushed back on my memory, that it was a universal language, with the exception of Iroquois and English.

"We are going to a place called Green Bay, in the Northwest Territory. Remember the name: Green Bay. It is in the Wisconsin country."

This strange story leads to very extraordinary situations and dramatic episodes. The reader will find it eminently worth reading to the end. Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of it. The surest way to get the Ledger is to subscribe for it, and have it come to your home regularly. Today is a good time to attend to this.

KISS HER

When your wife and you fall out,
Don't strut about and shout.
Don't growl at her, or scowl at her,
or hiss her.
You will find it doesn't pay;
Try your luck another way;
Just take her in your arms and gently kiss her.

When your wife and you must fight,
Make her think she's in the right,
Don't rush off to your club, where
you will miss her.
Should a fight with wifey start,
You will play the big man's part.
If you take her in your arms and
gently kiss her.

Cats and Dogs.

"Cats are a nuisance," said the woman with the hoe, vehemently.

"Oh, is that so?" returned the young woman who was shaking her flaxen tresses over the porch railing. "So you don't like cats, eh?"

"Never did!" vouchsafed the woman with the hoe. "I hate 'em!"

"That's understood," said the young woman with the flaxen tresses, icily. "People who own dogs hate cats. They think the world was made for no pets but brindle bulls, terriers and all other breeds of obnoxious ki-yis. If I had my way every canine in the world would be summarily executed."

"You don't look barbarous enough for that!" spoke up the woman with the hoe, snappily.

"A lot can be said in favor of cats in preference to dogs, Mrs. Wiggey. No one can ever say that a cat bit a chunk out of the poor milkman last week."

"To whom are you referring, Miss Imogene? Are you trying to insinuate that any one in our family did it?"

"Well, the poor lad told me he thought it was a Pomeranian."

"My Pomeranian? My Jojo? Madam, that milkman loses a good customer tomorrow. If he thought Jojo did it why didn't he come to me instead of running around to the neighbors?"

"I felt so sorry for him—he's little more than a boy."

"He has a wife and two children in school. Did he tell you that? I'll bet he didn't. He just wanted to fix up a scheme to do away with Jojo. He told me he was sure an animal did it, but he wasn't sure of the species. It may have been an insane cat, he said."

"A dog about the size of—about the size of yours, madam—leaped out of the darkness after Hames when he was coming in at 2 a. m."

"A fine hour to get in, I must say."

"Yes, and it must have frightened him dreadfully, for I saw him on the porch this morning with a wet towel around his poor head."

Mrs. Hames told me that Hames said it was a cat—about the size of yours—but she wouldn't be surprised if Hames said it was a flying fish."

"Excuse me, ladies," spoke up a policeman who had come in the back yard gate, "but did you see a queer-looking animal around here? Jones' pet Brazilian squirrel is off his nut and running around nights without a license. Did you see it, any of you?"

Starting at the Top.

Barber—"Hair getting thin, sir."

Obese Party—"Thank goodness! That anti-fat is beginning to work."

THE KAISER'S SPY

By T. C. Harbaugh

[Copyright 1917 by W. D. Boyce Co.]

Begun in No. 40, October 6. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents or by mail from office of publication.

In this startling story a certain American maker of war munitions and his heroic daughter become involved in some strange and menacing situations, imperiling life and the nation's safety.

CHAPTER IX.

ONE MYSTERY SOLVED.

THELMA, whom we left at the head of the staircase at 98 Antolyn street, fully expected in a moment to come face to face with the person who had opened the door on the lower floor. She knew not who he was, but she believed that Bran Cooli had come back. There seemed no escape. She had recovered the stolen blueprints, had them safely hidden in her bosom, but her peril threatened to be all for nothing.

Her hand still clutched the weapon which she had taken from her pocket, and she resolved to meet the coming danger with the courage of a true Van Dorn. But no one came up the steps.

After all, perhaps the intruder was not the dreaded Hindoo, and at this thought she took hope. Her nerves tingled, but they were strong. She had few fears now, and as the seconds passed without bringing into view the one below, she gradually lowered the automatic.

At length she slipped down the flight, but cautiously step by step. No one confronted her.

Reaching the front door on the ground floor, she jerked it open and fled. The weirdness without beckoned her; she passed out of Antolyn street unpursued.

Victory brightened her eyes as she ran up the steps of her own home and, passing the staring butler in the hall, gained her room with an exclamation of joy.

"What will the Indian tiger say when he discovers that he has been plundered?" she cried. "I have the blueprints, the ones which he took from the safe, and Eric must restore them without my father's knowledge. The adventure concerning them will come later."

Eager to acquaint Gage with her triumph, she hurried to his door and knocked.

"Thelma!" exclaimed the young man who instantly appeared. "You are white? Have you seen the supernatural?"

Thelma laughed as she threw upon the table the precious package and looked into his face.

"I have found them, Eric! I have recovered the prints."

"You, Thelma?" He picked them up and his eyes enlarged. "You didn't rob the robber, I hope?"

"I plundered the Brahmin's nest," was the reply. "I invaded Bran Cooli's house and found them on his table."

"Thank Heaven! But you risked your life, dear."

"What is life when love and America are at stake? Look them over, Eric; see that I have made no mistake."

Eric had already seen enough.

"They are the stolen property," said he. "Your father should change his mind for your heroic act."

"But he will not change it. He is a Van Dorn, Eric."

Eric let the prints fall from his hands, and the next moment he had Thelma in his arms.

More than an hour had passed since her adventure, and Thelma in her own room heard some one without.

"Joab!" she exclaimed, as she opened the door and stared into the startled eyes of the butler.

"In the library, Miss Thelma!" he gasped and fled.

A gripping fear took possession of the girl's heart. She was on the staircase in an instant.

The library was dark, but something told her that a new mystery awaited her beyond the threshold. Mentally armed to meet anything, she opened the door and stood in the darkness.

"Papa?"

Her voice sounded strangely where it once had a musical ring.

It was but a step to the table, and her hand fingered for the electric button. The light flashed up and Thelma reeled away with a cry of horror. Her father lay at her feet like one suddenly stricken with death.

For half a minute her brain seemed in a whirl. She felt sense and volition leaving her, but resolution came to her aid and she stooped over the figure on the carpet.

"Who has been here?" ran thru her brain. "Is this more of the German intrigue?"

There was no response to the agonizing thought, and when by main strength she had placed her unconscious parent in his chair, she drew back and looked.

The door opened, and Thelma turned swiftly to greet the intruder.

"Mr. Bryce!" fell from her lips, as she recognized the detective. "I wish for no other visitor at this time."

Theodoric Bryce came forward with his keen eyes and immobile countenance.

"Ah, a faint, nothing more," he remarked, with his wonderful sang-froid. "It has happened since I left the room."

"You've been here tonight, then?"

"I saw him but thirty minutes ago. But let him be. I have made a little discovery, girl."

"In this room?"

Without replying, Bryce crossed the floor and put his hand on the wall at a certain spot. To Thelma's amazement a narrow door slid to one side, disclosing a dark opening which might lead anywhere. Mr. Bryce turned and beckoned Thelma forward.

Her father lay at her feet

She was at the strange door in an instant, and her face was a wordless interrogation.

A flight of steps seemed to lead into the heart of the earth, but she followed Mr. Bryce downward till they stood on solid ground in the basement. A little dark lantern which the sleuth produced from some place revealed their surroundings.

"I thought there must be a secret door," said Bryce, in a low voice. "We are getting along pretty well, don't you think?"

The reply was a smile and a little nod.

"When did you find the hidden passage, Mr. Bryce?" Thelma asked, when she got her breath.

"Before your father came home. He has been out. He went off in the limousine."

"Where?"

"Let that remain his secret, girl."

"Listen to me, Mr. Bryce. The blueprints have been recovered."

"Really?"

"I have plundered the plunderer," cried Thelma. "I found them in Bran Cooli's possession."

"Then you beat me to them."

"What?" and Thelma's eyes dilated. "Was it you who entered that mystic den while I stood at the head of the stair with the automatic?"

"Why not? I found the blueprints gone," quietly answered Mr. Bryce.

"Had you come up the stair there might have been no Theodoric Bryce to trail the agents of the Kaiser."

"All's well that ends well," smiled Bryce. "I do have a little luck at times. Now, from here one has a good and safe exit from the house. We will balk the future game of the night prowler."

"It was the Hindoo who robbed the safe. I know——"

The enigmatical expression that came to the detective's face checked Thelma's sentence.

"Time will tell," was all he said. "Now we will go back."

They went up the narrow stair and again entered the library.

Benton Van Dorn had not come back to consciousness.

"Look! The little cone once more," said Bryce, pointing to some gray-colored ash on the table.

"He has been here again!" ejaculated the staring girl.

"Some one has, at least. But I hardly think it would be right to blame Bran Cooli for everything."

"Whom, then?"

The absence of an explanation on the detective's part nettled the breathless Thelma.

"Keep your secrets from me, then," she said, with some asperity. "Don't let me tread upon forbidden ground. I am going to trust you in everything, Mr. Bryce."

"I am going now," resumed the sleuth. "Joffre gets lonely when he can't purr for me," and with this Bryce moved toward the door.

"But my father?" cried Thelma, pointing at the figure in the chair.

"He'll come out of it presently. Just let him alone. I think best at home." And with this the little figure vanished.

Thelma watched the white face before her for a few moments and then switched out the light. In her room above she dropped into a chair and trembled.

"The wife of Julius Marburg!" she exclaimed. "Not while a drop of Van Dorn blood flows in my veins!"

The clock struck midnight; the last stroke was followed by an overwhelming silence. Thelma roused herself and retired. How sweet the silence and the darkness were! In a little while the sounds of the street below no longer roared in her ears. Nature came to her relief and she slept.

CHAPTER X.

THE KAISER'S "FINGER."

THE first glimmerings of the oncoming day were not far distant when a dark-bearded man opened a certain door and joined two other men who already occupied the room which he had entered. The door locked mechanically, and the last comer, after surveying his companions closely, threw himself into a chair.

"You have come?" said he, addressing the others. "Forty-nine has sent another message."

The couple were instantly on the alert.

"Action must soon begin," continued he of the black beard. "Wilhelm is growing impatient."

"It seems to me," answered one of the others, a little man with a foreign accent, "that things are not going just to suit him on the West front."

"That is true. But for the aid America is now giving the Allies things would go better overseas. We must make up for our reverses there by striking in this country." He fastened his eyes upon the small individual. "You can go any time, can't you?"

"At any time. Map out the mission and I am off."

Blackbeard drew from the inner folds of his coat a flat paper which he pushed forward.

"There are the plans of Plant 52," said he, coolly. "You know where it is situated?"

The other nodded.

"The 'force' will be on hand to aid you. There must be no halfway work. The United States is more than putting on its armor. Uncle Sam has awakened from his lethargy; Congress has got its blood up, and erelong the whole country will be a military camp. America must be crippled at home. The long arm of the Kaiser must reach to points where the blow will be felt most."

He ceased and lit a cigarette, showing his teeth at the same time in a vicious smile.

"I haven't got long to stay here. I am going back to the wireless station."

The two men rose to their feet, one of them concealing the folded paper on his person.

"Remember. Plant 52 must go the way of the others," resumed Blackbeard.

"What will Herr Van Dorn say?" grinned the little man.

"What he says is immaterial. No man shall stand between us and the shattering blows. Study the plans on your way down and act accordingly."

"I understand."

Then the other man who had said but little leaned toward Blackbeard.

"What is my duty?" he asked.

"Yours? I have not forgotten you, you know Theodoric Bryce?"

"The Government sleuth?"

"Yes, he with the big cat."

"I have seen him."

"You know his haunts?"

"As I know this house."

"That is good! He is fertile, this man who is the enemy most to be feared by our cause. He can almost see thru a wall of stone. When it comes to deductions he can put one over on Sherlock Holmes and Muller of Vienna."

"I wish we had Muller here to be his master."

"I tell you he can beat Joe Muller hands down," flashed Blackbeard. "You," he looked at the little man, "you for Plant 52 and you," to the other, "for the man with the cat."

The two left the room, and Blackbeard was alone. Ten minutes later the apartment was dark and untenanted.

The last man to emerge from the place was Blackbeard. Three blocks from the house he entered a little car which was apparently waiting for him, and was whisked away.

The man commissioned to look after Theodoric Bryce scurried underneath the lights, and soon turned up in the vicinity of the detective's quarters.

"How can I get in?" he asked himself. "The Captain says it must be swift work from now on. Galen has Plant 52 for his

goal and I have the man with the cat."

Evidently he did not like his commission, for he grated his teeth after his last words and shook himself like a dog.

Bryce's abode was not unlike the many other houses in the vicinity. There was a little yard in the rear; it was littered with trumpery and therefore unclean.

Getting into the place by the front entrance did not seem to strike the man favorably; he went down an alley and vaulted over a fence into this back yard. In an hour the city would swarm like a human beehive and then he could not work. He pushed his way to a narrow back door and tried the latch.

The portal was not locked, and in a moment he was inside. To all outward appearances the man was unarmed; if he carried a weapon of destruction it was not to be seen.

Once in the house the man became a cat in his movements. He made no noise, tho his feet were not encased in slippers. Such men are dangerous, for like the predatory feline they make no sound on the trail.

Like one familiar with houses like Bryce's, he went forward with confidence. He found a stairway in the dark as if he had eyes to which gloom is no bar. There was no carpet on the stairs, but he did not betray his presence as he cautiously ascended.

He paused but once, and that was when he reached the upper landing, for then he took something from his pocket. It was a little cone, pyramidal in shape and of a silver-gray color, the counterpart, so far as outward looks went, of the one whose ash Mr. Bryce had scraped from Van Dorn's table.

"Yes," the man muttered, "the Kaiser has a long arm, and this is one of the fingers."

As if Fortune was guiding him he moved down a narrow corridor till he found a door. At the bottom of this door was a circular opening large enough to admit a small animal. While he looked at it a huge cat purred against his leg, and after surveying him a moment disappeared thru the opening.

"It's the big cat," thought the man in the hall. "I want no better guide than the feline."

For five minutes the night hawk leaned against the door and listened.

"Is that you, Joffre?" he heard a voice say. "Get up on the couch here and we'll dream together."

A grin which would have done credit to an arch fiend overspread the features of the listener, and he straightened up. Theodoric Bryce was at home.

Then it was that the man in the hallway went to work. He removed the triangular bottom of the silver-gray cone and touched a little spring on the inside. A slight ticking began. The infernal machine had been set for a certain hour.

Cautiously the man placed the cone at the foot of the door and drew back.

"I guess the finger will do the rest," he murmured. "By the gods! We'll make a Belgium of this block!"

He went back down the hall, paced the steps without noise and was once more on the street.

No one had tracked him. He had done his diabolical work with coolness and nerve.

Arriving downtown, he stepped into an all-night resort and ordered a drink, which he carried over to a table and sipped at his leisure. He could not for the life of him keep a certain idea out of his head.

"The Kaiser's finger!" he would laugh every now and then. "It belongs to the terrible arm which some day will crush the Allies and paralyze America."

And Theodoric Bryce slept on with the ticking death at his threshold, while the Kaiser's agent sipped his port and laughed to himself.

"The Kaiser's finger, ha, ha! When the sun rises there will be no Theodoric Bryce and—no cat!"

CHAPTER XI.

THELMA AND THE MAN.

THE light of day was streaming into Thelma's chamber when she awoke after her night of adventure. She remembered having cast herself upon her couch after Mr. Bryce's departure with the discovery of the secret passage to his credit. Her sleep, tho it came after the excitement of her visit to the abode of Bran Cooli, had refreshed her, and she made her toilet and descended the broad stairs. The house was not yet awake.

She wondered if her father had come out of his faint, and with this uppermost in her mind she opened the door of the library and looked within. The armchair was empty and no one greeted her.

She was closing the portal when a footstep fell upon her ear, and she turned to come face to face with Joab, the butler.

He held in his hand a paper which he thrust towards her, "From your father," said he, and withdrew as Thelma with eyes astare took the message.

She walked over to a window and unfolded it. The message was brief enough to call for but one glance:

"My Child: I have been called away. Guard things well till I return.

"YOUR FATHER."

Thelma raised her eyes as a little smile gathered at her lips.

There was no sign of the harshness of their last interview in the message. She wondered if her father had retracted, if he had decided not to press the matter of the obnoxious marriage, if love for his daughter, after all, outweighed his regard for Julius Marburg.

The heiress of Van Dorn sat down in the chair and reflected. Suddenly a thought of the secret passage recurred to her, and she proceeded to search for the spring in the wall, which by pressing would reveal the hidden door. Eagerly she sought for it, but her fingers did not have eyes, and she was compelled to abandon the hunt.

Now that they had discovered the secret way, they would block the Hindoo. They would fasten it up so that no one could enter the mansion save by the front portal. She owed much to Theodoric Bryce; she would look to him to help her in her task of blocking the man who seemed to wield a strange influence over her father, and, in the end, render abortive the work of the German propaganda.

The blueprints were safe again. Gage would soon place them back in the safe, the combination of which should be changed, and they could defy the enemies of America.

When she had considered these things she left the library and returned to her own rooms. Hardly had she reached them when she was startled by a rap on the door. Elosa, her maid, confronted her with a white face. The girl was trembling.

"What is it?" demanded Thelma, clutching the maid's arm and pulling her inside.

"They have blown up the plant at Red Bank!" cried the girl. "I heard the newsies on the street crying the tidings."

Thelma's hands closed and she took a long breath.

"Get me a paper! Mr. Gage——"

"He has just gone out," was the interruption. "I'll get the paper," and Elosa was gone.

Thelma waited for her return with a face which showed her anxiety. She clutched the paper when it came and looked over the flaming headlines.

It was true. The munition plant at Red Bank, the one in which her father was so deeply interested, had been destroyed. The paper declared that it was the work of German spies, and warned the authorities that desperate measures must be taken at once to prevent further crippling of the country.

Thelma threw the journal aside and fell back into the soft depths of the chair.

Presently Elosa knocked again.

"Mr. Marburg is below," she announced, and the name swept all the crimson from Thelma's cheeks.

She seemed to swallow hard as her white hands clinched.

"Show him into the parlor," she said. "I will be down in a moment."

To face this man who had been chosen for her husband was not to Thelma's liking, but a stern resolution took possession of her whole being, and she was secretly glad he had come.

Julius Marburg rose to greet her as she crossed the threshold of the parlor, already having fixed her dark eyes upon him.

"I trust you will pardon this early call, Miss Van Dorn," said he, in a voice laden with insinuation. "I fear I have bad news for your father."

"Papa is not at home," Thelma hastened to say. "I do not know when he will return."

And then transfixing him with her gaze, she went on with scarcely a pause:

"I think we have your news in advance. Red Bank has been dynamited?"

"It has been destroyed, at any rate," answered Marburg.

"By the long arm of Germany."

"So the papers think," was the answer. "The matter will be investigated and the blame put where it belongs."

"As it should be, Mr. Marburg. The Government must wake up and throttle the agents of the Kaiser, who are among us to render abortive our war for humanity."

"Yes?"

Thelma thought she saw a change in Julius Marburg's countenance, tho she did not have a full view of his face.

"You are with us in our battle?" she went on, before the man could speak again.

"Why not? One cannot be the friend of Benton Van Dorn without sharing his views."

"I am glad to hear you say this," Thelma responded. "Papa is fond of you and——"

Julius Marburg bowed and looked at the glowing girl thru his long dark lashes.

"Proud as I am of Benton Van Dorn's friendship, may I hope that I have won favor in the eyes of his daughter?"

The flush came back to Thelma's cheeks. She felt a tingling of warm blood in her veins.

"There is nothing I would desire more in this world than the regard of Miss Van Dorn."

Something told Thelma to refuse the hand that was put out as these words dropped from Marburg's lips. A feeling of repulsion took possession of her and she drew back.

They were alone in the lofty parlor; the light of morning sifted thru the heavy curtains and rested in spots on the Oriental carpet.

She did not take the proffered hand. She could not, after what had passed between herself and her father about this man.

"You can call when papa comes back," she said for want of better words. "I am quite sure he will not be absent long."

It was a rebuff for Julius Marburg and his face revealed it. His teeth seemed to come together in a snap, and a dangerous light filled his eyes. These two things did not escape Thelma's observation.

Marburg crossed the room, hat in hand. He reached the door and turned suddenly upon the watchful girl.

"Your father has doubtless told you of my offer," said he. "It is made in good faith, prompted by love which you have inspired, and I trust——"

"There!" exclaimed Thelma, suddenly lifting her hand as she advanced toward the man at the door. "We will not discuss a matter which I have already discussed with my father. There is no need of it. I have given answer to your—your proposition, Mr. Marburg, but if you would hear it I will repeat."

He did not speak. The Satanic look in his eyes got deeper and more dangerous.

"Do you care to hear my decision?"

"I think I can guess it from your look, Miss Van Dorn."

"Then words are useless," rejoined Thelma. "If you can read words unuttered you must possess some of the powers of Bran Cooli."

Julius Marburg started. Thelma saw every vestige of color vanish from his face.

"You may know Bran Cooli, the Hindoo serpent who has cast a devilish spell over Benton Van Dorn. Is he in the pay of the Kaiser? But to my reply to your love-making, as I heard it from my father's lips, I cannot become your wife!"

The hand which until now had rested on the doorknob was suddenly withdrawn. Julius Marburg leaned forward and looked at the beautiful girl with eyes that seemed to be consuming their sockets.

"Cannot, eh?" he cried. "It is your father who bestows, not you, my lady. When you are the wife of Julius Marburg——"

"The stars will fall and the sun refuse its light!"

The regal form before the man seemed to increase in stature, and Thelma Van Dorn knew that the bolt had gone home.

CHAPTER XII.

WHAT JOFFRE FOUND.

BEYOND peradventure the bolt had gone home. The man with the Satanic orbs could not prevent Thelma from observing that her arrow had not missed its mark.

"Oh!" he grated. "So you decide? Very well. Your father may also have voice in this important matter. We can afford to wait, and meanwhile things in another direction will shape themselves."

"Do you mean things that affect America?" asked Thelma.

"No, no," was the reply. "Red Bank has been struck much to my regret."

"This bit of German villainy will be met as the Government should meet it. America is asleep no longer. She has cast off her somnolent robes and stands forth in her might, armed for the crushing of this crowned wretch who would set himself up as the arbiter of the world's fate. The cries of the dying of Belgium have been heard; the desolation of Serbia will not be forgotten by the Most High. The insults to our Flag will be avenged tenfold, and the murdered women and children of the Lusitania, sunk by the iron hand of Wilhelm, will sleep the better in their ocean grave when the bolts of vengeance fall."

Julius Marburg seemed to shrink within himself at these burning indictments.

"I am not yet done," proceeded the girl. "The spies whom he has sent across the water for the ruin of America will have death for their pains. They will be hunted down and not one of them shall escape the doom they have invited. If the Kaiser's arm is one of iron ours is one of steel. Nothing shall stand between it and eternal justice. The young men whom we are sending overseas to fight the battles of humanity will prove heroes as great as the knights of old who beat down oppression on the battlefields and made this world fit for people to live in. We will have no traitors in America. He who does not come out openly for us is against us!"

Julius Marburg was glad to go. He tried to smile, but the attempt was a failure. Triumph shone in Thelma's lustrous eyes.

He was gone, this man who had been chosen for her husband, this wretch who deep in his heart, as she believed, rejoiced in the wrecking of Red Bank.

Where her father had gone she could not imagine, but by this time, wherever he was, he must have heard of the blow that had fallen.

If she could have followed Marburg she would have seen him alight from a green car in front of his own abode. He went up the steps with a growl.

"She's worth winning," were the words that leaped from his throat as he cast his hat upon a table and tingled his overstrained nerves with his favorite potation. "There are few women like her in this world. She would make a brilliant leader of the Legion of Death of Russia. By Heavens! she has the courage of Joan of Arc and the blood of Maria Theresa. And she is to be mine in the end." He laughed at the end of his words and paced the floor for a few moments.

Just an hour later Bran Cooli opened the door of the house in Antolyn street and looked around the room on the second floor. The snaky eyes glittered; the brown skin shone in the light that flooded the little apartment, and the long fingers twitched viciously.

All at once he sprang to the table and glared at its contents.

"They are gone!" fell from his dry lips. "Some one has been here."

He rushed from the room and called a name from the head of the staircase. A woman heard him and appeared in the hall below.

"Come up here," commanded Bran Cooli and the woman obeyed.

"Who has been here, woman?"

Awed by the flashing eyes that regarded her, the woman drew back with a convulsive tremor.

"No one," she stammered.

"You lie!" and the dark hands reached out and pulled her toward their master. "You lie, I say! I have been robbed!"

"Really, master——"

"You must have heard the thief. You have failed of your duty. I should kill you!"

The bloodless creature was in the grasp of a pair of hands that seemed able to crush a ball of brass.

"Tell me when he came," demanded Bran Cooli.

"What is missing, master?"

"Never mind that. Curse you! I'm going to slay as they slay in my own country, but not with the cord. My hands are amply sufficient."

The voiceless creature gasped as the brown hands tightened at her slender throat. In all the universe, she thought, those hands had no rival.

In the fury of his passion Bran Cooli pushed his victim against the wall. Her face darkened; her eyes seemed to start from her head; her hands hung limp at her sides, all power gone, all resistance abortive.

"There!" hissed the brown-skinned fiend. "Perhaps after this you will obey."

He walked back to the table as the woman slipped from his grip and sat down as if nothing devilish had happened. By and by there was a movement near the door; the woman had come back to consciousness and was crawling away. He did not interfere.

In another part of the city, an hour

(Continued on Page 31.)

IT'S DIFFERENT NOW.

The autumn winds chant soft and low
Of ripening nuts upon the hill.
Time was I'd take my bag and go
And gather nuts that bag to fill.
But now I seek no woodlands brown,
I don't go nutting any more
But take things easy here in town,
And purchase stale nuts at the store.

In past years that my thoughts engage
I have pursued the antlered buck,
But now the "bucks" that make my wage
Alone I seek—with awful luck!
I hunt no more—'tis cruel sport,
I live upon a nobler plan;
I spend my time in shop and court
A-hunting of my fellow man!

The Detective Trio

THE BELL AND BEE

By Donald Kennicott

AND the woman sticks to that story?" asked Reynell from his perch on the stool by the glass case of the laboratory balances.

"Don't vary it a bit," affirmed Police Lieutenant Mackinson. "An' that's sayin' a lot when a woman's accused of murder. . . . Says she heard a sound like a bee humming; then a bell rang; then he slumped out his chair all in a heap. She saw blood on him and hollered. Swears she didn't shoot him herself, and that she didn't hear no shot fired."

Reynell scowled. "Mighty fancy yarn," he commented. "How does she explain having a gun herself—with one cartridge fired, didn't you say?"

"Yep—one cartridge fired. Says she shot it off in her basement to try the gun. Admits she carried it with her when she went to see Buzart—had some notion of forcing him to be decent."

"The bullet—eet feet hair peestol?" The third man, a lithe, dark-skinned youth, who would have been handsome had it not been for the heavy smoked goggles he wore, spoke for the first time.

"That's another funny thing, Louie," explained Mackinson; "we can't find the bullet. It went straight thru him, but we can't find where it hit afterward. The hole in his chest is about the size that would be made by a thirty-caliber automatic like that gun o' hers, tho. And those automatics do drive a bullet hard enough to send it thru a man at close range."

There was a moment's thoughtful pause. The three men in Municipal Chemist Reynell's laboratory had in the last year informally constituted themselves a detective bureau of an unusual sort. Mackinson, who was chief of the little detective department of Westopolis, had brought some suspected poison to Reynell for analysis, and had found the keen young scientist of so much help that he had formed the habit of dropping into the laboratory to discuss cases with him. A few months before, in the Shirley road bomb affair, they had captured as an accomplice a queer young Frenchman afflicted with a malformation of the eye, which, curiously enough, made him half blind in the daytime but gave him an owl-like excellence of vision at night. Instead of sending him to prison, Mackinson had recognized his possibilities of usefulness, and was training him into a veritable sleuth-hound, who had already achieved some marvelous results in keeping watch on the night life of the city.

"Just what," inquired Reynell, presently, "did the woman—Farnwell, did you say her name was?—go to see this fellow for?"

"Well, according to her tell—and what I've been able to pick up from other people so far—she sure had a right to be sore on this Buzart fellow. He has a rather bum reputation. Kept a kind of music store at the Wright street place, but his real lay was the loan-shark game, with maybe a little white-slaving, too. He seems to have got hold of what money Mrs. Farnwell had, and to have fixed it so she owed him quite a bunch, too. Seems she and her family had lived in Mexico up to two years ago. Husband had a mine or something. He got killed when the row started down there, and she had to beat it to the States and leave 'most everything they owned behind.

"She has a son and a daughter. The daughter's a nice-looking girl about 18. The son's about 20; was hurt pretty bad in the same row where his father was killed and has been laid up at one hospital or another ever since—is in a sanitarium somewhere now.

"One hell of a hard time—that's what Mrs. Farnwell sure has had these last two years. She had a few thousand in stocks and bonds, but it wasn't stuff she could realize on without a big sacrifice, so she tried keeping boarders; this Buzart was one of 'em. She didn't have hardly any money and didn't make much—and she borrowed of this Buzart to help pay the boy's hospital bills. He took all the securities she had as collateral for the few hundred he let her have. Then he got fresh with the daughter—I'm not certain whether on his own account or as a commercial proposition. The mother tried to throw him out, and he declares her securities forfeited because she can't pay—even starts to foreclose on her furniture. Oh, he was a real gentleman all right; no doubt of it! And besides, she and the daughter are crazy to get some more money to put the son in a different sanitarium or something.

"Yesterday Mrs. Farnwell comes home and finds a note from the daughter saying she was going to see Buzart at his music store and persuade him to do the decent thing. The mother flies right up in the air, at that—scared on the girl's account. So she takes the gun—tries it to see if it'll work, she says—and chases out after the daughter to Buzart's place. She says the door was open and she walked right in. Buzart was there alone, leaning back in the swivel chair at his desk. He swings around in his chair—and then, according to her tell, she hears this queer sound like a bee humming. A bell rings—and Buzart slides out of the chair onto the floor with blood all over his neck. You see——"

Mackinson paused as Reynell rose and moved hurriedly across the room. Tobias, the huge yellow laboratory cat, had climbed to a forbidden shelf, upset a glass jar and was endeavoring greedily to commit suicide by clawing out therefrom a sample of meat suspected of tetanus infection. Reynell rescued the meat sample, methodically boxed the ears of Tobias and returned to the stool by the balance-case.

"That's rather a hard story to believe," he commented. "She had the motive, and she's found with the discharged weapon and the victim; and that bell and bee business is—well, a bit fantastic."

A fat and angry German.

"But I do believe her, somehow," declared Mackinson. 'If you'd of seen her, you'd of believed her, too. She's one of them women that—that affect you that way. And none of the people near—those in the stores on each side of Buzart's place and in the flats upstairs, nor the man that was passing on the sidewalk and heard her holler—none of them people heard any shot. This man that was passing and a kid from next door heard her holler, and ran in—and when they saw what was up, the kid hustled out and brought a flatty he met walkin' beat a block or so off. The flatty called an ambulance—Buzart was dead when it got there—and took Mrs. Farnwell off to Central Station.

"And that's where I'm up against it, because you know Mahoney and the Central Office bunch have all got regular reinforced concrete heads and can't see nothin' but what's on the surface. And they're crazy for a conviction, since the papers have got after 'em so about a woman's always bein' able to do murder and get away with it. And they're sore on me, too, for showin' 'em up like I've done once or twice, and because they think I've got a feather-bed job. They'll sure send Mrs. Farnwell up, unless we can prove sure she didn't do it."

Reynell nodded. "I guess you're right there. Where was the girl—Mrs. Farnwell's daughter—all this time?"

"Says she hadn't been to see Buzart yet. Lost her nerve when she got near his place and was walkin' up and down in the park tryin' to get hold of herself."

"You don't think that perhaps she did it, and the mother——"

"Hardly—tho perhaps. It's hard to believe it of a girl like her, but we're holdin' her. Now, what I want you to do, Rennie, is to go down to the morgue right off, and sit in at the autopsy. Mortley, that coroner's physish, is a wise guy—not! I've a notion that lots of things gets by him. I'll give you authority to butt in, and you may see something that'll help."

"I'll see something that'll help make me sick in my little tummy," growled Reynell. "Sitiine little morning's entertainment you've cooked up for me!" But he got up briskly, none the less, and slipped out of his laboratory apron.

"Meanwhile," went on Mackinson, "Louis and I are going to prowl about Mrs. Farnwell's house some more—and Buzart's place, too—and see if we can't pick up something."

It was a perplexed and disturbed countenance that Mackinson brought to Reynell's laboratory next morning. Reynell waved an arm in greeting—he was sucking some venomous-looking purple reagent into a pipette at the moment, and could not speak. He turned the stopcock of the pipette, fastened it with a spring-bound clamp to an iron standard, and then turned to the police lieutenant.

"Sit down, Mack," he said. "You look worried."

"I'm worried aplenty," admitted Mackinson. "Louis has disappeared."

"Disappeared?"

"Yep—vamoosed, flown the coop, done a bunk. You remember I sent him out to Mrs. Farnwell's place again yesterday. Well, he come back pretty soon, and said he'd found a place in the brick wall of the basement where a bullet had hit lately—bears out Mrs. Farnwell's story, you see. Seein' he was doin' so well, I sent him back to look around some more—and he ain't come back. Ain't reported at the office—ain't been to his room—nobody ain't seen him."

"That's odd," commented Reynell, "tho of course Louis is a queer customer. But he's always been absolutely reliable since we got him away from Trenotti."

"Absolutely—that's why I'm worried. I'm afraid something's happened to him. Did you find out anything at the autopsy, yesterday? Mortley's report didn't show anything except that Buzart died from a gunshot wound in such and such a place, and so on. Did you find out anything more?"

"I did—copper."

"A cop! What the devil d' you mean?"

"Copper—the metal copper—in the wound. It was like this: I noticed a queer little greenish spot just inside the hole in the front of the neck. I spoke to Mortley about it, but he didn't think anything of it. So I snipped off the bit of flesh and brought it up here. I found a tiny speck of metal there, under the microscope. And the analysis showed it was copper. Now how the dickens could that have got there?"

"Couldn't the bullet have carried a bit of the brass cartridge shell along with it?"

"Perhaps. But this is copper—I made sure of that. And the cartridge shells in her pistol were brass. Most of them are."

"I give it up, then." Mackinson rose and shook his head dubiously. "I can't see that that tells us anything. I sure am worried about Louis. I've sort of got fond of that boy somehow, Rennie, can't you shut up your shop here for an hour or two and come out to that Farnwell place and nose about there with me a bit? You might catch something that I've missed—some trace of Louis, I mean."

Reynell hesitated to leave his laboratory at that hour, but his own interest joined Mackinson's anxiety in persuading him. A half-hour later, the two alighted from the police lieutenant's little car before a large brick house in a run-down neighborhood.

They found the house in the chaotic state to be expected of a boarding-house with its mistress suddenly removed. They were admitted by an old Mexican woman, who sullenly showed them about from room to room on the first and second floors and in the attic; but to no purpose; no clew as to the death of Buzart or the disappearance of Louis was revealed. "Let's go downstairs and look at the bullet-mark Louis said he found on the wall," suggested Reynell then.

"It won't help us find him," growled Mackinson, but he led the way down the narrow stairs into the dimly lighted basement and then flashed his electric torch about on the brick walls of the laundry until at the spot the French youth had described, they found a freshly chipped brick with a twisted lump of lead clinging to it.

"That's it, all right," said Reynell. "I suppose——"

He broke off suddenly, for a faint yet sinister sound had come to his ears, and Mackinson had clutched his arm hastily.

"Listen!" croaked the police officer.

There was a dead silence; then again there came to their ears, dull and muffled, the sound of a groan. Reynell felt his flesh "creep," and an icy breath seemed blown along his spine.

"That's a man," gasped Mackinson. "And it's near here."

They went to the doors, Mackinson to that leading to the stairway, Reynell to that opening on the furnace-room. Again they listened in racking silence. And at last again there came that ghastly sound of a man groaning in pain. "It sounds nearer," gasped Reynell. "Bring your flash here, Mack."

Mackinson came with his electric flash-lamp, and they searched every nook and cranny of the room, which was partly floored with boards and partly paved only with dusty sand; but there was no trace of human occupancy. For a moment they looked at each other in horror-stricken perplexity. Then, so close that it seemed almost at his elbow, Reynell heard that eerie, marrow-chilling moan. This time, with a gasp of mingled hope, incredulity and dread, Reynell whirled about and snatched open the door of the summer-cold heating furnace. Mackinson flashed his light into the opening; and there, trussed hand and foot and cramped into the narrow cavity, his head and face smeared hideously with blood, they beheld the lost Louis.

A moment later, and they had him out, unbound and lying on a table in the laundry. And while Mackinson hustled out to fetch a doctor, Reynell sponged off the boy's face, chafed his cramped limbs and then, catching sight of a bottle of laundry ammonia, soused his handkerchief in it and held it under the boy's nose.

Louis' eyes opened suddenly; he gasped, choked—then he strove to sit up, his teeth chattering in terror. "The black man!" he babbled. "Ze beeg black man!" And then his eyes closed and he relapsed sickly into unconsciousness.

The doctor found Louis not badly injured, however—an ugly scalp-wound and badly congested limbs from his long confinement being the total of his injuries. Two hours later, he sat up on the couch in Mrs. Farnwell's living-room, whither he had been carried, and related to Reynell and Mackinson the story of a most surprising adventure. After reporting to Mackinson, the day before, the finding of the bullet-scar on the brick wall of the basement, he had returned, according to Mackinson's orders, to the Farnwell house. It was growing dark, and instead of entering, he had loafed about outside, watching. Presently a roughly dressed man of dark complexion had appeared and gone into the house by means of the door into the cellar. Louis had slipped after him, followed him to the furnace-room, and there, in the almost complete darkness, had seen and heard the man burying something in the sand of the unfloored portion of the room.

This done, the man had started to leave the house. And here it was that Louis made his mistake; for instead of being content to follow the man, he must needs try to surprise him into betraying himself, as he had once or twice seen Mackinson cause a man to do. Louis had therefore confronted the man and spoken to him in the darkness. And then, as Louis explained: "Mon Dieu, quelle ferocite! He leap upon me like a taireeble lion. I make ze endeavor to keek heem in ze slats, but no, I am too late. He get ze strangle-hol'; I give heem ze short-arm jol'—a stinger, yes, I bet you! An' then—hola! I guess he tap me on ze bean weet' an ax or piece of lead pipe or some leetle trifle like t'at. I see ze stars—all of t'em. An' t'en I see not'ing. And t'en I wake up weet' ze headache of hell, an' all outline' in a horreeble leetle hole, as eef I wair dead in my col' grave. Ale! Quelle horreur!"

First obtaining from Louis the approximate location of the spot where he had seen the man burying something in the cellar, Reynell and Mackinson hurried thither; and after a little grubbing about in the recently disturbed sand, they unearthed a tobacco-sack contain-

ing a dozen long rifle-cartridges. And these cartridges had a peculiarity which caused Reynell to whistle with astonishment; the bullets, instead of being jacketed with steel or nickel, were encased in a sheathing of dull red copper.

"Find the man who buried these cartridges, and you'll have the man who shot Buzart," declared Reynell, with elation. "And I think you'll find it's a Mexican. It's my idea those cartridges were made in Mexico—they use copper a lot down there."

"Find where the bullet hit after it went thru Buzart, and we'll be able to prove Mrs. Farnwell didn't fire it," supplemented Mackinson.

But they found neither one. They did learn, however, that another Mexican servant of Mrs. Farnwell's—a man named Fernando, who had been an old retainer of the Farnwells in Mexico and who had, after six months in the Villista army, followed Mrs. Farnwell to the States and helped her in the boarding-house enterprise by doing the rough work about the place—had disappeared, and that a description of him tallied, roughly speaking, with that of the man who had attacked Louis.

But all the agencies at Mackinson's command failed to find any trace of this man. Nor did further search reveal the final resting-place of the bullet which killed the music-store proprietor. And so the search for the Buzart murderer, other than Mrs. Farnwell, came to a standstill. She was held for trial. With the newspapers and the bulk of the police department backing up the State's attorney, her conviction seemed certain. And then occurred an event which distinctly complicated the situation: Mrs. Farnwell's daughter Eunice escaped from the custody of a detective who was escorting her to Mackinson's office for interrogation, and promptly vanished, even as Fernando had done

"Something mighty queer there," declared Mackinson, in discussing the matter with Reynell. "It's the slipperiest bunch of folks and facts I ever met up with. Can't find the bullet; Mexican disappears; girl gets away and disappears; can't put my hand on anything or anybody I want." He shook his great head wrathfully, and went on after a moment: "And Mrs. Farnwell sticks to that fool story of hers about the bell and the bee. I've pretty much changed my mind about the daughter; I'm sure now, that Mrs. Farnwell either thinks or knows that the girl did it. But what good does that do us?"

"None at all," admitted Reynell.

At length the case of the State versus Mrs. Farnwell came to trial. The testimony of the man who had heard Mrs. Farnwell's outcery, who had entered Buzart's store and who found Mrs. Farnwell standing beside Buzart's body, was first taken.

"I was walking in the direction of Buzart's store," testified the man, a young bill collector, "and was about two hundred feet away, I think, when I heard a woman scream. I wasn't sure just which store the sound came from, but I ran toward it. As I went, she screamed again—twice more, I think. When I got in front of Buzart's place, I saw the door was standing open and looked in. This woman"—with a nod toward Mrs. Farnwell—"was standing by a man who was lying on the floor.

"Just then a young fellow came out of the store next door and went inside with me. When I got near, I saw the man on the floor was all bloody. I tried to feel his pulse but couldn't find any. He seemed to be dead. I looked around. There was a woman's handbag lying on the floor, and near it, an automatic pistol. I picked up the gun and saw that one shot had been fired. The woman just stood and stared like she was a statute. I asked her what she shot him for. She says: 'I didn't shoot him. A bell rang, and he just fell down there.' I told the young fellow from next door to go get a policeman. He hustled out after one. The woman kept sayin' she didn't do it, and took on pretty bad. Then the officer come."

On cross-examination, the witness admitted that he had heard no pistol-shot—but thought he might not have noticed the report of a small revolver "at that distance."

The youth who had run into Buzart's store from the next-door grocery at about the same time as the bill collector, corroborated the latter's story, except that he was quite sure that he had heard the sound of a pistol-shot a moment before. . . . No, of course he couldn't be positive it was a pistol-shot; it might have been the slam of a door; but he thought it was a shot.

The officer whom the youth had brought, and who had arrested Mrs. Farnwell, also described his part in the affair. And the ambulance physician testified that Buzart had died as the result of a gunshot wound inflicted not more than a half-hour before the ambulance arrived. The bullet had entered just below the collar-bone on the left side, and had come out at such and such a spot, and so forth.

And now Mrs. Farnwell herself was placed on the stand. She proved to be a woman of striking appearance—with a clear but sun-tanned skin, steel-gray hair and blue eyes. She bore herself well—but her good appearance was really against her; for was it not always pretty women who committed murders and then expected to "get away with it?" And had she not lived for years in Mexico—that land of blood and evil and treachery? And that invalid son business—old stuff!

She was directed to tell her story, and was allowed to do so without much interruption. She told this story of her life simply and straightforwardly—the story which she had told Mackinson and which the latter had recounted to Reynell. Presently she came to the day of Buzart's death and told of finding the note left by her daughter.

"When I came home and found that note from Eunice, saying she was going to see him, I—I don't suppose I can explain how I felt. No one who didn't know him—know how clever he was, and how cruel, know of the things he had done to other women—could realize how it affected me. I got out the pistol from my trunk—yes, I admit that. I even went down in the basement and tried it to see if it would work. I thought that I might have to use it—that it might be a question of life or death. I don't suppose I was quite sane, but I hurried down to his store as fast as I could. The door was open, and he was sitting in his swivel chair at his desk by the open window. I didn't know whether to be relieved or worse frightened when I saw Eunice was not there.

"He swung around, still leaning back in his chair, and looked at me with that strange, evil smile of his. And then—I don't understand it; I've thought a great deal about it, and can't imagine what it could have been. Perhaps I was not—not quite right in my mind and don't remember correctly. But it seemed to me that I heard an odd humming sound, and then a bell rang. I looked around. Then I heard—heard him give a queer sort of cough; and then he slid down out of his chair."

That was almost all The questions asked her she answered in the same manner—a manner which to a few seemed a perfectly lucid truthfulness; which to many seemed the artful pose of a clever and dangerous woman; and which to some seemed the simplicity of a broken mind. This last was the most charitable judgment recorded after the trial had adjourned for the day. "Conviction Certain" was the headlined opinion of every newspaper in town. And the police department openly rejoiced that at last they were to secure a verdict against a woman charged with murder—all except Mackinson.

The latter was much cast down. "It's all the worse, now," he told Reynell, "because now when it won't do her no good, her other affairs are straightening out. Her son—she's heard from him and he's really getting well at last. And we've got hold of those securities Buzart was stealing from her. They're worth ten thousand easy—and he was getting away with them for the five hundred he'd lent her. Sweet lot of good the money'll do her after this slant-headed Central Office bunch send her up."

Next morning Reynell was at his laboratory early—getting thru his routine water-and-milk analysis in order that he might attend the Farnwell trial—when his telephone rang and Mackinson's excited voice came to him.

"Come down to my office right away," called the police lieutenant. "The pig has come out of the poke."

The pig in question would appear to have been a fat and angry German armed with a battered trombone. For when Reynell entered Mackinson's neat little office off the police department corridor of the city hall, the chemist beheld Mackinson leaning forward eagerly in his chair while the German in question tested the aforesaid instrument on the slide of the police officer's desk and spoke with great emphasis and feeling. Behind him stood a lawyer whom Reynell recognized as a specialist in receiverships.

Mackinson raised a commanding hand to impose silence, on Reynell's entrance. Then, turning in his chair, he shouted triumphantly: "Here's our bell, Rennie. Here's the bell Mrs. Farnwell keeps telling about." With his knuckles he rapped smartly on the flaring mouth of the trombone, and a bell-like reverberation echoed thru the room.

"Now, look here," pursued Mackinson. He picked up his electric flashlight and squirted its rays into the wide mouth of the trombone. "Come close and look down the throat of this thing."

Reynell looked, and far inside the dark recess made out a lump of lead sticking to the brass of the instrument—yes, and a little flake of torn copper jacket also.

"There," announced Mackinson, "is where the bullet went after it passed thru Buzart. This thing was lying on the floor, and we looked at it, but never thought to look inside it. Wasn't it the darndest chance that it was turned just right for the bullet to go in that way?"

At the look of amazement on Reynell's face, the German could contain himself no longer. "You see," he announced dramatically, "so we haf discofer the imbortant evidence. I buy the instrument in the stock of this Buzart at the receiver's sale—make offer on the lot of t'em; for I am Hochman—conductor of Hochman's Imperial Vienna Band. I did not dry the trombone, for we haf no trombone player. But yesterday there came to me a man—a pig, proudt-looking Bafarian mit der pig chest and cheek, and say he can play der trombone and vant der chob. I look at him; I see der pig chest and cheek of der born trombone player. I say, 'Vell, ve dry you; come by rehearsals tomorrow.' He say neffer mind rehearsals—he conzert trombone player, can blay anyting—will blay tonight right off. I say ve dry him, and last night he come to Satzdorf's Garden vere ve are blaying.

"I gif him der trombone und der music; he fiddle mit der slide. I rap on der rack mit der baton, und ve start to blay—der 'Spring Zephyrs.' Der trombone comes not in for about fifty measures—ven der t'understurm music gommence. Dodt Bafarian, he pick up der horn; I nodt to him ven he come in; und den, Ach Gott! Ach Weh! Ach Gott! Such a hellish soundt it come from der trombone! I frown him to silence.

"Ven der piece is finished, I say, 'You a trombone blayer! You are discharge—beadt it.' Den ve go on mit der next piece, but he take der trombone off ofer in der corner, und all t'ru der conzert he fuss mit t'at trombone—shake it und feel of it, and look black in der face mit der anger.

"After der conzert, he come to me mit der trombone, und show me it was half geplugged mit lead in der inside—he t'ink der oder men cheslous an put der lead dere. I know better; I brink it to Mr. Wilkins here who sold it to me, and he get all excited and say it is der missing pullet, und pring me und der trombone here und—"

He would have perhaps supplied still other thrilling details had a telegraph boy not at this moment marched in and slapped a yellow envelope on the desk before Mackinson. The police lieutenant tore it open, then whistled softly and handed the message to Reynell. It read:

"Take witness and look inside door to plumbing-shaft off lavatory fourteenth flpor Waters Building. Find rifle killed Buzart. Will arrive Wednesday. Important evidence.

"EUNICE FARNWELL."

Thus it happened that shortly before the State rested its case against Mrs. Farnwell, a little after noon that day, there were borne into the courtroom two pieces of evidence that caused much craning of necks on the part of the spectators: A long military rifle and a battered brass trombone.

A few minutes later, the attorney for the defense was saying, "Gentlemen, Mrs. Farnwell has told you how she entered the store of this man Buzart; how before she had exchanged more than a conventional word of greeting with him, she heard the sound of a bee humming; how she then heard the sound of a bell striking somewhere near by; and how the unfortunate man fell to the floor dying. We propose to prove, gentlemen, that the humming sound was caused by a bullet such as this"—(he showed one of the cartridges found in Mrs. Farnwell's basement, pointed to the copper-jacketed bullet, and handed it around for inspection)—"fired from this rifle." He sent the rifle, a much worn, grim-looking military weapon equipped with a telescope sight, after the cartridge for inspection by the jury.

"We propose also to prove," continued the attorney for the defense, "that the sound of a bell described by Mrs. Farnwell was caused by that bullet striking the mouth of this trombone after the missile had passed thru the body of the unfortunate dealer in musical instruments. We propose further, gentlemen, to prove that the bullet was fired from the rifle by a Mexican named Fernando Ramirez, standing at the time in the lavatory on the fourteenth floor of the Waters Building and aiming the rifle by the aid of a telescopic sight, out the window of this lavatory—the testimony of Mrs. Farnwell that Buzart was leaning back in his chair at the time explains why the bullet did not enter the body at an angle."

Reynell was the first witness called by the defense. He testified simply to the finding of the bit of copper in the wound in Buzart's chest and was then excused, for the time being. Louis then took the stand—telling first of finding the bullet-scar made by Mrs. Farnwell's experimental shot in the basement of her house, and then of his encounter with the Mexican and of the attack made upon him. His story caused an excitement that would have been a real sensation had not his exotic appearance and language somewhat weakened the general credulity in his statement. Mackinson corroborated his story, however, and told of finding the Mexican cartridges buried by Louis' assailant. And then Eunice Farnwell was called to the stand.

She proved to be curiously yet elusively like her mother—having the same voice inflections, the same courageous carriage of the head, the same candid regard. Aided by an occasional question from the attorney for the defense, she told her story, first going over the ground covered by her mother the day before—her life in Mexico, the death of her father, the wounding and subsequent long illness of her brother, their return to the United States. She told particularly of an old retainer named Fernando Ramirez:

"My father once saved the life of a Mexican named Fernando Ramirez," she explained. "Ramirez was extremely grateful, and served us afterward almost like a slave. After my father was—was killed, Fernando joined the Villista army. Six months afterward, he came to us in El Paso and showed us the notches in his rifle—he had exacted a tenfold vengeance for Mistro Tom, as he always called my father.

"He had been badly wounded in the foot and would not be able to fight for a long time, and he begged to stay with us—so we brought him on here with us when we came. We always talked to him freely, and he knew everything about us. He knew about our trouble with Mr. Buzart, and twice he came to us and asked our authority to kill him. Fernando is mostly of Indian blood, and his code of morals is—very primitive. Of course, we told him not to think of such a thing—but he must have done so—must have planned very carefully how to do it.

"That day—that day when I went to see Mr. Buzart and mother became so frightened, Fernando saw that a crisis had come, and he believed the time had come for him to act. He has told me all about it. He wrapped up his rifle in newspapers and went to the Waters Building and climbed to the top. He had been there before—to a dentist to whom we had sent him, who has his office there.

"Fernando says he had figured it all out very carefully before; he had noticed that from the lavatory on the top floor, he could see the stores in the next block. Fernando was always a good shot for a Mexican, and with Villa he'd become a regular sharpshooter. Looking thru the telescope on his rifle, he found Mr. Buzart sitting in his swivel chair at his desk in the store almost a block away. He says he watched Mr. Buzart for some time; he was uncertain whether to shoot him or not. Then he saw my mother coming into the store. He had seen her take the pistol and try it, and he thought he must kill Mr. Buzart to keep her from doing it. So—he fired.

"Then he opened the cupboard door into the little shaft where the pipes run up—he'd planned all that before—and hid the rifle there. Then, he slipped out of the building by the stairway, and went back to our house and hid in the woodshed there till night, when he took a freight train back to El Paso and Mexico. These are the details of the story he told me. When he disappeared, I knew it must have been he who shot Mr. Buzart; and I saw that the only way to save mother was to find him. So I got away and went to look for him. I

FOR THE MEN.

Away to the war, with the spirit true—
Away to the war! and then
The men'll be "diggin' in" for you,
And it's you must "dig up" for the men!
The brave toil at home
For the boys o'er the foam—
It's you must "dig up" for the men!

To fight in the home fields the battle for bread,
With the strength of one as ten;
With main and with might the home guard in the fight—
It's you must "dig up" for the men!
The sons of the soil
And the captains of toil—
It's you must "dig up" for the men.

hadn't enough money to—to travel quickly, and so it took me a long time, but at last I found him in his native town near Chihuahua. He offered to come back with me to save mother's life with his own, but I knew that would not be necessary. Instead, he signed a confession—before witnesses."

A moment or two later, the clerk of the court read aloud this simple statement, which had been written and signed in duplicate—in English and Spanish:

"I, Fernando Ramirez, do hereby solemnly swear that on June twentieth, 1915, I left the house of Mrs. Thomas Farnwell, on Sherburn street in the city of Westopolis, where I then resided, and proceeded to the Waters Building carrying with me a rifle wrapped in newspapers. I then ascended to the fourteenth floor and entered the lavatory. Thence, by means of the telescopic sight on the rifle, I was able to see across the intervening space into the store of one Albert Buzart. As I watched, my employer, Mrs. Farnwell, entered Buzart's store. He was sitting in a chair. I could see him clearly. I aimed the rifle at him and fired; I saw him drop out of his chair. I hid the rifle in the plumbing shaft and went away.

"That evening I hid my cartridges in the cellar of Mrs. Farnwell's house. A man sought to arrest me as I was leaving. I knocked him down and tied him up and hid him in the big stove so that I would not be pursued. I then made my way back to Mexico. If required, I will return to Westopolis and testify to this in person, but I would prefer not to do so, as it were better to die in battle on my native soil than perish at the end of a rope in a strange land."

The signature of Ramirez followed, along with that of the notary and two witnesses.

There was little more to the Farnwell trial. Mackinson and two of his men testified to the finding of the rifle in the place described by Ramirez. There followed the customary cross-examination. Then the jury received its instructions and retired. Less than an hour later it returned with a verdict of acquittal.

"Strangest case we've ever had," commented Reynell to Mackinson, as they were indulging in a peaceful smoke in a corner of the laboratory not long afterward.

"Yes," confirmed Mackinson, "it was. And I've never told you the funniest part of it."

"Why," exclaimed Reynell, puzzled, "what was that?"

"Well——" Mackinson hesitated and flushed sheepishly. "You remember I told you Miss Eunice got away from a dick that was taking her to the office for a little question-fest. As a matter of fact, she did, but—cross your heart you won't tell this?"

"I give you my word," promised Reynell. "What's the mystery?"

"Well, it's too good a joke to keep. We'd held her under charge of being an accessory. One day I had her brought to my office for a talk. I told the man who brought her up to wait outside, and he goes and sits on the stairs by the elevator-shaft around the corner of the hall—which was all right; nobody could get by there without his seeing 'em.

"Well, I pumped her, but I couldn't get no different story out of her. We talked quite a bit, tho, and by and by she told me a fine large yarn about how she and her mother had found a queer hiding-place that this Buzart fellow had made in the wall of the closet of his room at their house. Now, you know there's a closet off my office; the door to it was open a bit, and she says as natural as can be: 'Look here; I'll show you how it was.' She goes over to the closet and goes on explainin' about this foxy wall-safe affair of Buzart's; and I goes over to see what she meant, never suspectin' nothin'—she was that natural and innocent. 'You see,' she says, 'there was a kind of spring arrangement in the wall right about where your overcoat is hanging there, and——'

"I leaned over to look, innocent as could be. Next thing I know, the little cuss had given me a hard shove, so I lost my balance and stumbled into the closet, and before you could bat an eye she'd shut the door and locked it.

"I was pretty mad, but I felt too much of a fool to holler, and so I tried to bust the door out. But the closet was too deep for me to get a good leverage, and I guess it was five minutes before I kicked a hole thru a panel and reached thru and unlocked myself. And she was gone. I ran out, thinking of course Casey'd picked her up—and there he sat on the stairs and swears there ain't nobody gone by him. It was only this morning, when she told me that I found out how she did it."

"And how did she?"

"Well, when she'd slammed the closet door on me, she hustled out into the hall, but at the corner she sees Casey waitin' there. She turns back, thinkin' to find a fire escape, and just then a scrubwoman comes along with her mop and pail. She beckons to the woman—who's a Guinea and don't savvy English;

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LITTLE TIM

By Alvah Milton Kerr

HE HAD been born in a shameful place, and heir to unkindness and evil days. There were few other legacies, but many gifts were thrust upon him—sneers, snares, neglect, and severance from the luckier born—and these seemed fatal. It may be thru a law and love insoluble to us it proved not so; that to the Great Father's heart the stains and wrongs and sorrows thrust upon the boy, as to an earthly parent's, made him but the dearer; but measured in the cold, hard, human way, his fate was sorrowful, indeed.

The region where he first took up the burden was a low one, a sunken quarter of the city, the foul and squalid accretion of many sad conditions. Here a day of fiat, low skies, and sobbing, quarrelsome winds, that ended by a wet fog driving in upon the great city and settling upon the filthy quarter like a death-cloth, had filled the vile neighborhood with unusual gloom. The spirit of insanity, the promptings to crime and abandon, always exhaled by such diseased, unhappy surroundings, seemed to increase and multiply with the oppressive darkness. In at the doorways of the low, half-lit saloons the steaming, pitiable populace jostled and crowded; from the thick, throat-clogging medium that filled the reeking, slippery streets, to the tongue-scalding, brain-maddening potions of the bar; from distempered elements without and within to mental ruin and forgetfulness.

In one of these haunts of evil, a place of shame, of villainous music and dancing, were negroes, Poles, Italians and men and women, drunk and ruined, from Heaven knows what other quarter of the compass. What animalism! What faces! What swallowing of fire!

By midnight the back room was a numbing whirlpool of delirious feeling; heat, sweat, rags, music, liquor, profanity, the beat and shuffle of feet in the dance, cries, and maudlin laughter. Look at the roads along which these lives had come, threads running from under this lecherous roof to every quarter of the globe! the cradles over the sea, to mother-bosoms north and south, east and west!

Did God, seeing it all, grieve that life had been made a thing so capable of ill? Or was the fault, somehow, society's?

At 3 o'clock in the morning they began to fight. In many the chords of sensation seemed often raw for further pleasure. Then some one was struck down, and the reeling, half-blind concourse seemed suddenly full of tigers. Men sprang upon each other; two were killed, and a woman, dividing the polluted atmosphere with shrieks, was thrown, trodden, kicked, and dragged into a dark side-room for dead. Then, when too late, the Law stepped in, the place was cleared, and the undiscovered woman, drunk and battered with the coming of the dawn, yielded little Tim to the world, and her own debauched spirit to the mystery of death. Of such stuff are some realities! Out of such elements was fashioned little Tim!

It seemed well-nigh a pity, into what shadow soever the mother had gone, that he had not followed her. But he lived; a drunken negress saved him from death to lose him to a sadder fate. Into a nest of evil even more hateful than that wherein he saw his first glimmering, doubtful dawn, she carried him, and all his earlier years were passed in gathering rags and bones, in stealing, and being kicked, and cuffed, and beaten. Somehow his spine was weakened; I know not if from that first dreadful hour, or by blows given afterward by those who used him much as one might the boot's toe to drive into and loosen garbage with. One could not easily have told how old he was, if the number of his years were eight or twelve, so cowed and deformed a spirit looked out of his blighted face. The yellow and green of putrid pools and gutters seemed settled in his skin, leaving it a pallid olive, and his blue eyes had a cringing, frightened, furtive look.

Away at one side of the roaring city, and in a leprous hovel at the river's edge, was where the first years went over him, merciless, crushing, slow-moving in their passage. Often he turned sick when digging in the simmering slime, and all his base surroundings swam before him; by times he fainted in his loathing and weakness, and was carried home and burned back to life again with fiery liquor. The negress held his poor life as in a vise, and her home was a place of cursing, of theft, of fighting, and drunkenness. The child, like a weak worm under foot, used often to fight for his life, only to be the harder cursed. Oh, it was pitiful! Yet, here were thousands more no better off than he, some worse; and there beyond in the beautiful city were other thousands, clothed silkenly, fed richly, and hearing no heavier burden than time and, perhaps, too much of happiness! Down into which region were the mournful eyes of the pitying Christ turned most often, think you?

But little Tim could not go on unchanged; mutation, which makes and unmakes, but yet is nature's savior, opened at last a little fissure in his life, gave him one fatal glimpse of sweet and grateful light, then shut him out in darkness.

He was 10 years old then; yet, from lameness and his foster mother's cattlike care, the child had never been beyond his festering quarter, save in back alleys when gathering garbage at the misty hour of dawn, or when carried or dragged thither at night upon some thieving errand by the negress' evil friends.

They were numb with liquor that afternoon when he left this midnight mother and the white thug who was her consort, and he had been spurned into the street, where he lay a long time bruised and full of pain. Then, dizzy and crying, he came away; dizzy from his hurt, and crying because he was leaving the little rag-matted hole under the stairway where he had always slept, because he was parting from the hard faces about him, the venomous creature who had starved and beaten him, and her sunken, shambling hut!

Ah, he had never known else! By day and by night, winter and summer, this had been his all, his world, his home. Ponder it, you who sleep on down in chambers fragrant and lined with rose and gold! You who are all but soured with honey, was not here a soul?—your

He was struck by a cane.

own twin-essence, starved and ruined, moving in brother-flesh across the Field of Lessons?

For a time he followed the river, limping and sobbing, and gazing thru his tears into its polluted depth, as if yearning after the soft oblivion it might yield. But, after his sore feet touched the water, his poor little heart was not stout enough, and he turned away, and erelong came into a beautiful avenue; then he ceased to weep; wonder swept the tears from his hollow eyes. It was Sabbath—tho he knew it not—and the sun was going down in a great flush of clear vermilion far away at the other end of the beauteous street, lighting a thousand soft and glimmering fires along the stately dwellings as it sank. Everywhere were flowers and exquisitely dressed children, lovely girls sitting by richly appareled men and women in costly chairs upon the porches, with rings flashing, bright rugs beneath their feet, and a background of tinted glass and splendid furnishings.

A light that was alien to the face of little Tim slowly began to illumine his pinched and pallid features; then he wavered and went back; then that look of strange delight came into his eyes again, and he hurried on as if he were entering the borders of Paradise.

Costly automobiles were rolling along the smooth pavement and hundreds of women and children, clad in satin and velvet and flower-like fabrics, drifted with mingling hues along the avenue. The child forgot his rags, his bare feet, and crooked spine; the look of delight began to deepen in his eyes; then he saw that some stared at him, that others scowled and pressed back their costly clothing to let him pass, and the light died out of his face, and he shrank from side to side and turned into a little park and hid.

It smelled sweet as Heaven there among the blossoms, and he lay quite still on the soft grass with his poor heart fluttering. Up above him he could see the deep, serene summer sky, hung here and there with filmy loops of lace that seemed to burn with pink and crimson from the far-off sunset. It seemed to him he had never noticed it before; that his hungry eyes had always been peering into ditches and holes and filth, or blind with tears. How calm and sweet it was there where the rich dwelt!

He could hear voices here and there from vine-wound porches fronting on the little park, and one, limpid and engaging, was saying near by, "Oh, I shall go to Dr. Easman's church. Do you not think his delivery beautiful? It rests me just to look at him; he is so handsome, too!"

"Yes," said a silvery voice in reply, "and he is so gentle. He is quite unreasonable about his salary, tho, they say; will accept but seven thousand! It's too bad, he is so pleasant and handsome; he could surely do better than that!"

Then little Tim saw a form garbed in blue, and capped and belted, come between him and the peaceful azure of Heaven, and he sprang up and ran, but was struck by a cane, and wavered and fell. But ere the officer's fat paw could secure him he was gone.

The next avenue seemed fairer than the first, and was alive with beautified humanity flowing on toward the churches. Down this, with a little thread of blood trickling from among his matted curls, he ran like a kind of hunted animal, and coming to a larger park hid himself again, and lay there panting and sobbing while the shadows began to gather and huddle and group, and the clear stars swarmed into the voiceless deep above him. Then, in a little time, he crept away and came into the broad avenue again, going he knew not whither. A huge church was just beyond him, radiant with light and colored glass, and he drew back with fear. But at that a great wave of music went mellowing up thru all the glowing structure, and the child's breath stopped and his grimy hands came together with a clutch. He had never heard other music than the banjo and drunken, ribald songs, save at long intervals the far-away playing of a band, and the soft thunder of this, the level, roll, and swell, and melting fall, drew him like a turning world.

Cringing but palpitant, he crept into the shadows by the wide-arching entrance and listened. A stream of people, jeweled, satined, and prismic under the showering light, were passing in, but he could hardly see them, his blood was throbbing so. Suddenly there was a sweeter melody; a wave of human voices, strong, smooth, harmonious, that swelled and sank upon the undulating organ flood and charged the air with sympathy.

It was stronger than the ragged child; with lips parted and eyes hungry he entered. Oh! Oh! What a beautiful place! Music, light, color, and fragrance! He stood bewildered. Then suddenly he felt himself softly pushed and heard a low, menacing voice bid him quit the place, and he looked up at the stately, odorous usher, and shrank out of the great doorway into the shadows again.

Then the music fell away into silence, and odors delicate and faint and sounds subdued and restful floated out the splendid doorway past the child. Then a voice came with the odors—deep, even, mellow, and handled like music. The minister was praying, but prayer to little Tim was something all unknown. Like words that were flowers it drifted by him, a long train of soft melodious clauses. He could not understand it, but he felt its beauty. The thread of humility running thru it, the tender pleading, the pathos, and gentle adoration sent a great wave of loneliness across him; a kind of clear, thick darkness, an isolation that was pain, a crushing medium like heavy enveloping iron. Ah, how widely he was isolated from every heart and every good! He could not comprehend why, but his condition crushed in upon him like descending death, until quailing and moaning he sank beneath it and crouched in the shadow on his bare knees, with his face against the cold wall of the Father's house, he wept and struggled. Suddenly a great peal of music swept up—voices and organ-chords in a lifting, joyous flood, and the child, as if God's voice called him, leaped in at the doorway and stood straining and wavering in the light. Only a moment he stood there, wild with a thirst for comfort, quivering to be saved; then that musky presence rose again before him, and the usher's big white hand grasped and led him to the entrance. There the stately presence muttered something, pushed him a little, and turned away, and ragged Tim, lame, and all but blind with fright and feeling, tripped and plunged headlong down the flight of granite steps, glanced from the

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THE EYE OF SIVA

Or, Pools of Flame

By James E. Casey

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE "STORY."

IT WAS on the shock of midnight. The editorial rooms of the Mail-Tribune were as thick with life and activity as a culture-tube full of voracious microbes. Under a forest of green-shaded drop-incandescents, a regiment of frenzied men sweated in their shirt sleeves at chattering typewriters, groaning copy-desks, telephones, and drawing boards that prayed against the abuse of Art. The morning paper was in the throes of its Vesuvian birth.

It was the close of a "rotten" day. The night before had broken a "beat" such as the city had not seen for years. "Scoop" Norton himself had written the sensational story that set all town to shuddering and asking, "Why?" But here, a day later, with every available man out on that murder mystery, nothing new was known—no news—only fuller reiterations of what had been already printed.

Norton had written another of his highly colored, vivid, sensational, query stories; but it was only a repetition, a "rehash," of the one of that morning. And the public wanted news. It was in a perfect frenzy to know the truth—the motives behind the mysterious murder of Hubert Belasco.

Dave Patullo, still on the "desk" because of the exigency of the time, chewed savagely on the end of a black cigar, and swore.

"Damnation!" he growled. "The 'beat' of the year! And it broke splendidly. We had the other papers standing on their heads, with their tongues sticking out, looking wide-eyed at us. But now we know not a blamed new thing. Twelve good hours later, and we know nothing more of this consarned mystery!"

He looked ugly over at Malachi Courtney, the detective, talking in shoulder-shrugs to the toiling "Scoop" Norton.

"The public is feverish with excitement and horror. Every newspaper reader is panic-stricken with fear of assassination and dread of the unknown murderer. Man, woman and child—all are dying to learn the news, the truth. Jehoshaphat! What a time for a scoop! To find the murderer! Heavens! But that would be great! To learn anything—any clew of the crime, of the assassin, of the whole d—d mystery! But what's the use? There's no hope. We go to press in half an hour, and then—great Heavens!"

He leaped out of his chair and grabbed a staggering man by the soaked lapels of his dripping coat. The white-faced fellow had just pitched into the city room thru the open doorway, and was reeling in a drunken, dazed way.

"It's the cub!" gasped "Scoop" Norton, behind him.

"It's Carter Van Cleave, by all the saints!" exclaimed the hearty voice of Detective Malachi Courtney.

In that short space had collected about Patullo and the sleep-walker a ring of editors, copy-readers, reporters, artists, even copy boys.

"Who is he?" asked Steward, the managing editor, and twenty more newsmen at the one time. "Can he give us a tip on this mystery?"

"No! He's only a cub I fired yesterday. I don't know why he's here, or what's up with him. Say, what's the matter, kid?"

"What's ailing you, me boy? Tell us all. You're all right now! You're in the Mail-Tribune office."

And the good-natured Malachi Courtney, experienced in such matters, patted the dazed night-walker on his wet shoulders.

"The Mail-Tribune office?"

Carter Van Cleave, as he slowly mouthed those words, stared blankly at the ring of white, hard-eyed faces that made up the paper's staff. Slowly, to his befuddled brain, penetrated that name, Mail-Tribune. And then, when he at last realized where he was—the place of all places he most wanted to be—he gasped out:

"I've got it! I've got the mystery!"

"What?"

"You've got the mystery?"

"You've found out the key to all?"

"Cub, you know who killed Hubert Belasco?"

"You say you know what none of us know—what the city doesn't know?"

Steward, the "Big Squeeze," was the first of all those men to recover.

"You've got the mystery? Then, quick! Out with it!"

"Yes, cub; tell us!" put in Patullo.

"Quick! Who killed Hubert Belasco?"

"Tell us the answer! Who was the murderer?" And a number of the men made to put hands on the shaken young fellow to force it out of him.

They had forgotten all desire to score a "scoop." All they thought of was to hear the tale they did not know—to learn the key to the Great Enigma.

Carter Van Cleave got a grip on himself. These men wanted first to know who killed Hubert Belasco. So he said:

"Hubert Belasco was strangled to death by Aboo Dhingra, chief priest of the Temple of Siva, the Destroyer, in Raijaipur, an old city in India, near Benares on the Ganges. He was stabbed by Ra Dass, an assistant priest."

That statement, the most unexpected and startling he could have made, stunned the crowd. They stared blankly at him. Then "Scoop" Norton bit out sharply:

"How do you know? And how do we know that you tell the truth? Why was Belasco killed by Aboo—what'd'yecall-him? And why, for the love of Mike, was Hubert Belasco disguised as a woman in his wife's boudoir at that hour? Answer that, or throw up your wild bluff!"

Carter Van Cleave was almost fully recovered, by now. He drew himself up, under that fire, and retorted:

"Give me time! And, when I am done, give me the big story to write. Now I'll begin at the beginning. Listen!"

And, without further ado, he plunged into recounting what Hubert Belasco had to do with the mystery. He told of Belasco's plodding character and explained the reasons that had induced him to embezzle a huge sum of money from the bank, of which he was cashier, to invest in Cheridah Copper stock.

"Patullo, ring up old Morton Seymour and ask him if what I say is not true. Mention my name and I'll guarantee he says, 'Yes!' For, gentlemen, I was the one that told him his son-in-law had bought shares of Cheridah, and first gave him the idea that Belasco had hypothecated money from the bank. My reasoning was substantiated by Di Fontana, the expert accountant, who, before my eyes, went over Belasco's books and disclosed a deficit of one hundred and twenty-eight thousand dollars."

Dave Patullo made a move toward the 'phone, then, of a sudden, paused.

"No! Go on!" he said. "We'll make sure afterward!"

"Hubert Belasco was in desperate straits, when Cheridah pitched to the bottom. A striped suit and short half-cut faced him, unless he in some manner make good his shortages. But how? Right here, Hubert Belasco, who ordinarily was one of the slowest of plodders, showed sudden genius, albeit criminal genius. He would make a second stealing to cover up the first."

"But how?"

"How could he do that?"

"Where does the masquerade come in?"

The young amateur smiled.

"Hubert Belasco hid his wife's green dress and picture hat, of a season gone, in his rooms. Then he faked a trip to his mother in Los Angeles. He never left town, for I learned from the manager of Reeve's that he was in there a day later. Three days after he bade adieu to his wife, he returned, in the dead of night, to the house, and let himself in by his key. He dressed himself in that green dress and a blonde wig——"

"But why?"

"To look like and hence be mistaken for his wife. He was going to carry out his sinister night's work in her boudoir, and, while it would be the undoing of Hubert Belasco to be seen at that time in that room, it was just the proper place for the servants or any one else to see Mrs. Ynez Belasco, as he pretended to be.

"So, in an old green dress worn many times by his wife, and a blonde wig, scarcely lighter than his wife's red hair, Hubert Belasco swept thru the Belasco mansion to his wife's boudoir. There he picked up a Japanese stiletto from his escritoire, where it served as a paper knife. And then, thinking himself alone, he moved over to the crimson night light before the frowning statue of Siva, the Destroyer, to carry out the work that——"

"But wasn't he alone there?" It was Malachi.

"No! He was not alone! But let me go back. You all know that Ynez Belasco, before her marriage, explored the Orient and the South Seas. In this morning's paper she herself told how she got this statue of Siva, which I have referred to and which stood in one corner of her boudoir, from the Temple of Siva in the old city of Raijaipur. And thereby hangs a great deal of this mystery."

The attentive ring gave one general gasp of astonishment.

"This statue is called the 'Soul of Siva,' from the fact that its worshipers believe it contains the soul of the third person of the Hindoo triad—Siva, the Destroyer of all Creation. It is the most prized treasure of the Sons of Siva, an ancient Brahman order you probably know better as the terrible Thugs of India.

"Now, when the theft of the 'Soul of Siva' was discovered, great was the to-do in the ancient Temple of Siva in the old, old city of Raijaipur. Many were the invocations to the vanished Siva to consume the red-haired mem sahib with its red central eye. Many a Dance of Death did those fanatical Sons of Siva indulge in to show how they would like to strangle the Feringhee of the red hair.

"But that was not all. The Thugs did not stop there. More than vengeance they wanted the 'Soul of Siva' restored to its temple in Raijaipur. So they said Siva had cast a 'sending.'

"Aboo Dhingra, chief kapa-lika, or skull-bearer, in the Temple of Siva, was sent to track down Mrs. Ynez Belasco. First, he was to recover the 'Soul of Siva,' and, secondly, he was to be an instrument of Siva's vengeance. And with him went, to assist him, two younger priests of Siva, one of whom I know as Ra Dass.

"Across the whole world these three red-turbaned Orientals followed Ynez Belasco, from Raijaipur in darkest India to incandescent-lighted San Francisco. More than a year had passed, since the theft had been committed; but they discovered her home, drew a diagram of it and the location of the stolen 'Soul of Siva,' and finally, one night, broke into the house, by way of a basement window, and stole upstairs to the boudoir and the idol they so much desired.

"And then, just as they entered the boudoir and were about to lay hands on their beloved Siva, they heard a rustle from the hall. Aboo Dhingra scurried behind the figure in Japanese armor in one dark corner of the boudoir. Ra Dass concealed himself behind the writing-desk, and I don't know what the third priest did.

"And now, in walked Hubert Belasco, the blonde wig on his head, the green dress trailing on the floor."

Those tense faces paled in the electric light.

"Go on!"

"Then what?"

"Hurry up! What next?"

"Hubert Belasco, looking for all the world like his red-haired wife, picked up that ivory-handled Japanese stiletto and moved over to the 'Soul of Siva——"

"Why?" burst out Malachi, unable to hold his patience. "What has that sanshee to do with this second stealing—this raising of thousands of dollars to make good his embezzlement?"

The former cub smiled confidently.

"Listen! This idol is three-eyed. Two of its eyes are of clear white pearls, very valuable. The third and central eye, called 'The Red Eye of Siva' and believed by its devotees to be all-powerful and evil, is a ruby of monstrous size and indescribable beauty—a gem worth thousands and thousands of dollars! Now do you see the threads of this mystery?"

"No!" the crowd fairly boomed, and, as one man, shook their heads. "Hurry up, and explain!"

"I found that Hubert Belasco, the day after he was supposed to have gone to Los Angeles, entered Reeve's and had cut to order for him two imitation pearls and one false ruby of precisely the same size as the three priceless stones which form the eyes of the 'Soul of Siva.' He purposed substituting these cheap fakes for the precious gems in the face of Siva."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE STAR.

THE mystery was solved. The reason for the masquerade, Hubert Belasco's presence in his wife's boudoir at that time, the Japanese knife in one hand, the ruby of rubies in the other, the fake stones in the silver cigarette case—all were explained in that single, short statement.

He had intended removing the monster ruby and precious pearls, and replacing them with the glass ruby and cheap imitation pearls. Once the fake stones were in the eye-sockets in the idol's face, it would have been almost impossible to detect them as frauds. And the theft undiscovered, he could cut the stones or sell them whole, and easily realize enough money to balance his books once more!

"But the 'sending' of Siva intervened," Van Cleave went on. "Hubert Belasco, as he stood in that wig and green dress before the evil idol, did not know that three pair of black Oriental eyes were watching his every move from out the dark.

"He lifted the pointed Japanese stiletto and began at once and hastily to pry the monstrous red ruby out of its socket in the god's bronze forehead. By stabbing the point of the dagger in at one side and then levering on it, the gem was worked loose and fell, at last, into his hand. And then——"

"And then?" from the entire ring in unison.

"And then, as he stepped back, Aboo Dhingra, flat on his stomach, slipped like a snake across the carpet up behind him. You can see his track in the rug still. He made not the echo of a noise, and Hubert Belasco was unaware of his attack, until the scarf was about his neck.

"A case of Thuggee, pure and simple. With fiendish glee, the old white-bearded Thug tightened the strangling scarf about the masquerader's neck, garroting him in a breath, a flash. And as Hubert Belasco fell forward on his face, Ra

YOU KNOW HOW IT IS.

Almost any man remembers
How in days of long ago,
In Octobers and Novembers
When the world was all aglow,
He would find a sack and duly
Fare him forth to gather in
Walnuts big as baseballs—truly!
Nuts that made him whoop like sin.

Then next day he slowly fed them
'Twixt the big stones one by one,
And with hands all stained he spread them
On the barn roof in the sun.
Tho he thought he'd brought a thousand,
Tho they almost weighed a ton,
Hulled, he sadly bent his brows, and
Wailed: "There jest ain't hardly none!"

Oh, the years bring woes and wonders;
They bring wisdom, too, or will;
But we never outgrow blunders—
For we're grown up youngsters still!
So alas! how much we measure,
When the edge of triumph dulls,
But to find—in dull displeasure—
That we've carried home the hulls!

Dass, one of the other two priests, thrust the kris-like decomposition knife of the Thugs between his shoulders.

"But ere they could further hack the dead body to hasten decomposition, let alone accomplish the real and most important purpose that had brought them out of Asia, they were startled and sent fleeing pellmell by the sound of some one's approach.

"It was only the butler, you recollect. But it caused those three Sons of Siva hastily to throw open the boudoir window, slip down a crimson turban-cloth of theirs, and scurry from the house, without one look back at the still form on the rug.

"They had not the 'Soul of Siva' they had crossed the world to get; but they felt that, at least, they had avenged its sacrilegious theft. They did not know of the masquerader, Hubert Belasco; for they believed the dead figure on the rug was the red-haired mem sahib, Mrs. Yuee Belasco."

"How do you know this? It's a wonderful tale, but where did you learn it all? Quick, please, and tell us!"

It was the "Big Squeeze," Managing Editor Steward, who thus voiced the thought of all in that enthralled group.

Clearly and concisely, Carter Van Cleave told all—the whole course of his investigations and his terrifying adventures of two nights with the trio of red-turbaned Thugs. And when he had done, the "Big Squeeze" grasped his hand and pumped it energetically, enthusiastically.

"My boy, you're a wonder! You've done the impossible! I never before thought Sherlock Holmes could have really lived till I heard you, tonight. You're a genius as a detective."

"Shake, me laddybuck!" put in good-natured Malachi Courtney. "Seeing what Steward said, I can't call ye my esteemed contemporary. No; you're my master. The keenest detective I've ever met."

Meanwhile Patullo had turned to the expectant "Scoop" Norton, who seemed, in his present anticipation, to have got over his jealousy of young Van Cleave.

"Scoop' Norton," Patullo cracked out, "here's your chance! We'll hold the paper! Nobody cares a hang how late we get out this morning—for we're going to give this blamed old town the shock of its life! Now, then! Get Carter Van Cleave to one side! Get the big story out of him again—and quick! No! Not the story of his Sherlock Holmes' work and adventures with——"

"I get you! The whole story of the mystery—the straight, dramatic story of the crime. For the lead, eh?"

"That's it, 'Scoop'. You write the lead story—the straight tale of the murder and mystery—under your own name. Van Cleave will get busy on a special story of his investigations. We'll run that as a piece of real sleuthing that puts the fiction of Holmes and Dupin in the shade. Your stuff will go on the first page under seven-inch scare-heads. Van Cleave's will follow, on the second page. Now—busy! We want to get out this paper some time——"

"Just a moment!"

It was Carter Van Cleave. He had caught only the last part of Patullo's commands; but that had been enough to send his face, of a sudden, as white as when he first had appeared in the office.

No one else had thought those orders unusual. Was not "Scoop" Norton the star, and the big story his as a matter of course, altho Van Cleave had brought it in? Reporters, desk-men and office boys—all looked astounded at the cub.

"I think I have won the right to do the big story!" said that young fellow, decisively. "From the first, I carried on the fight against this mystery—single-handed. And I want to achieve the triumph I started out to gain. I told you, Patullo, I would return here a star. I want to write the star story and prove my word."

"But," began Patullo.

"I will write the big story, Mr. Patullo, or none at all! It is my story. I have earned the right. I know I can do it."

"And you shall do it, Van Cleave!" The "Big Squeeze" spoke with a conclusive note in his voice that was final. "You certainly deserve to write the big story, my boy. You know the story as no other man knows it. You have lived it. Get over there, Van Cleave—to work!"

As a goad to great achievement, Steward added:

"You have proved yourself a crack detective. Now, Van Cleave, is your chance to prove yourself a star reporter!"

Carter Van Cleave got to work. Beneath a green-shaded incandescent, he sat and hammered out, without a pause to think, page after page on a steadily clattering typewriter. And, as each page came out of the machine, red-hot from his brain, it was read by the "Big Squeeze," Dave Patullo and "Scoop" Norton, in turn.

He had finished the "lead"—the big story of the crime and the mystery—and was on the last page of the detailed story of his own investigations and adventures, when he felt a hand on his shoulder.

"Carter Van Cleave, this is great. You've made good with a vengeance. I've waited as long as I could, in order not to disturb you, but I've reached the end of my self-control."

It was the "Big Squeeze"—Steward himself!

"And I want to tell you your lead story puts it over any news story I've ever read. It's dramatic, gripping, full of color. No star in 'Frisco—in the whole country—could beat it. Carter Van Cleave, you're an all-round wonder. This city will know you tomorrow as Carter Van Cleave, star!"

That was expressing Carter Van Cleave's ambition in a word. And, red to the ears, he sat stunned by his triumph. And then, as if to fill his cup of happiness to overflowing, he heard Dave Patullo say, in an aside to "Scoop" Norton:

"The deuce! The kid who went out a cub did come back a star!"

The End.

* * *

FLOWERS FOR ALL.

I wish I had millions and millions of dollars," sighed the woman with the soft brown eyes.

"What for? Machine guns and Red Cross supplies?" asked her husband.

"I wouldn't need this money till after the war. And then I would use it to establish a new basis of aristocracy. Coming home in the street car today, I was so impressed with how tired everybody is. They are all grinding out their lives trying to get where they are considered 'somebodies,' and it struck me that most of them will be in another world before that."

"I suppose you'd give each one a regular income and let him work or play as he pleased?" the husband surmised, with a rising inflection.

"On the contrary, I'd do nothing of the kind. Work is necessary to health. But I'd fix it so each one could find happiness right in his work and make it so any job or profession, salary or income however little or big, would not affect his station in society."

"You're talking nonsense," the husband vowed good-humoredly. "As it is now, anybody can be happy and rested if he'll satisfy himself that what little he has is really all he needs. But tell me how on earth you'd pull off the miracle."

"I'd do it with flowers! The idea occurred to me on the car when I saw a ragged-looking man gaze into a florist's window, then run his hand in his pocket, bring it out empty, brush it across his eyes and shuffle off. That man needed inspiration from the flower he wanted and couldn't buy. Perhaps it was the one his mother used to grow in the little garden back home. Or maybe it was the one his sweetheart had worn the night he promised her that he would make a great man of himself. If he could have carried that posy along with him it might have given him the courage to pick up the loose ends of his life and make out of it after all what the woman he loved expected of him. As it is, his poor, frazzled existence will keep on fraying out."

"I see," her husband declared. "You would buy flowers for everybody."

"Not exactly. I'd do a lot more than that. I'd buy every greenhouse, seed and bulb in the country. I'd corner the market and sit tight, as you men say. But it wouldn't be for the purpose of running the prices up. After I owned all the flowers they would forever be free from the curse of money. I'd establish public florists."

"And each fellow could draw a flower on his card?" the husband asked mockingly.

"Not only that, but he'd have to. I'd make it a law for every one to draw a certain number a month and make them non-transferable, so rich and poor alike would receive the same number. I'd forbid any one hiring his flowers cultivated, so if one had them thrive better than another it would be the result of his own handiwork."

"And he need not return them to the public flowery?" the husband inquired.

"Why, no! I want to make flowers the standard of aristocracy. Instead of people being judged and catalogued and Who's Who'd according to the number of pennies they have in the bank or the degrees of culture in their skulls they would be aristocratic in proportion to the quantity and quality of flowers raised. And since these were given to them in the first place, money grubbing could have nothing to do with it. By cultivating the gentle blossoms people would soon come to love them and understand their silent messages. Then the world would right itself. The free libraries are good—for folks who can read. That reminds me, mother used to have a cook who boasted that she could bake as good cake 'as them that reads.' And so I think the flowers speak as wonderful a language as 'them that writes.' And in the first few lessons I suspect they would teach human machines what things in this life are really worth while."

"Now," said her husband, "all you need is a couple of billion millions. I can give you a tip on how to get hold of all that cash. I know a fellow——"

"Who?"

"Can't you guess?" her husband teased.

"I guess," said the woman with the soft brown eyes, in a tone that was appealingly wistful, "I guess you mean the promoter with the red nose."

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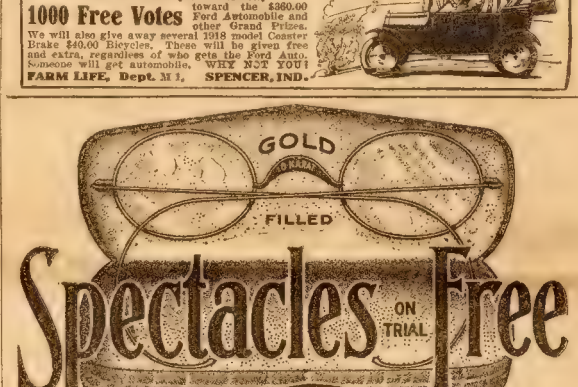

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A SOMEWHAT LIVELY OWL

Mr. City sport—"Gee whiz! I've been doubling all day in my nice new hunting suit, and with Prune, my faithful dog, and that owl is the first blamed—

"Thing I've seen to shoot at. (Bang!) Hurray! I hit it! It must be wounded, for it fell to the ground. Oh, I'm a dead shot, I am!

"I wonder what all those flies are doing around there. Probably they are fond of dead owl, they have such beastly taste—

"Holy mackerel! Yow! Help! Get out of the way, Prune, give me a chance to run."

Why didn't some one tell me that was a hornet's nest!

Thoughtful Doctor.

Patient—"What do you think of a warm climate for me?"

Doctor—"That's precisely what I am trying to guard you against."

TOWN SPECIALTIES.

There is a man in our town,
And he is full of prunes,
He has a rusty phonograph
And never changes tunes.

A POOR CUSTOMER.

The proud and haughty matron
Gives tradesmen quite a jar
Who merely spends a nickel,
Then sweeps out to her car

And He Did.

"Won't you give me a kiss to remember you by?"

"You'll remember longer the kiss you didn't get," said the wise girl.

Sympathy.

Husband (groaning)—"The rheumatism in my leg is coming again."

Wife (with sympathy)—"Oh, I am so sorry, John! I wanted to do some shopping today, and that is a sure sign of rain."

Lawyer—"Your swindles were enormous. How much have you left of the money?"

Client—"Ten dollars

Lawyer—"Such a spendthrift! You ought to go to jail, and I hope you will."

Unlucky.

The East End doctor was attending an injured woman who had come to his surgery with her arm severely bitten

He dressed the wound, and as he did so he remarked

"I cannot quite make out what sort of animal bit you. The wound is too small for a horse's bite and too big for a dog's."

"Oh, it wasn't an animal!" exclaimed the patient. "It was another lady."

Auto Agent—"This car is perfectly better buy."
Pirate Pete—"Nix. I'd never risk my life in a dangerous thing like dat."

The All-compelling Bones.

A darky in Louisville who had gone broke in a crap game turned to a friend and requested the temporary accommodation of a small loan

"Sam," said the person thus importuned, "I'd lak mightily to let you have some money, but I'm out of luck my ownself. Dis yere dollar I'm about to shoot is de last dollar I got in de world."

He shot and lost, while Gus looked forlornly on. He reached into his vest pocket and hauled out a crumpled bill

"Wy, sho 'nuff, yere is another dollar!" he said in tones of amazement.

Again he shot—and lost. Still holding fast to the dice, he unearthed a third bill from the sweatband of his hat.

"Now dis yere is absolutely de last dollar I owns on dis earth!" he stated for the benefit of the company at large and his chum Gus in particular. "W'en hit's gone I'm thru'."

He risked it and lost it. As he slid his free hand toward an inner recess in the waistband of his trousers the bankrupt Gus spoke up.

"Keep on shootin', nigger!" bade Gus. "I'se keep on shootin'. Dem bones'll mek you tell de truf yit!"

His Full Not Unchecked.

Two insurance agents—a Yankee and an Englishman—were bragging about their rival methods. The Britisher was holding forth on the system of prompt payment carried out by his people—no trouble, no fuss, no attempt to wriggle out of settlement.

"If the man died tonight," he continued, "his widow would receive her money by the first post tomorrow morning."

"You don't say!" drawled the Yankee. "See here, now, you talk of prompt payment! Wal, our office is on the third floor of a building forty-nine stories high. One of our clients lived in that building story, and he fell out of the window. We handed him his check as he passed."

He Knew the Reason.

A short time ago a gentleman who was traveling in Lancashire had occasion to stop at a village on the outskirts of a well-known manufacturing town.

After having transacted his business he had a few hours on his hands, and therefore, to while away his time, took the opportunity of inspecting the places of interest in the locality.

Early in the afternoon the bell of the village church commenced tolling.

The visitor's curiosity being aroused, he stopped a lad who, from the cotton on his clothes, appeared to be a doffer, and who seemed to have come from a mill on an errand, and asked

"Can you tell me, my boy, why the bell is tolling?"

"Nah, am coon answered the youngster, quite innocently. "It's because th' sexton's poolin' th' rope."

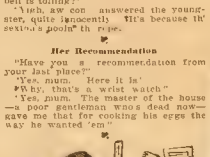
Her Recommendation

"Have you a recommendation from your last place?"

"Yes, mum. Here it is."

"Why, that's a wrist watch."

"Yes, mum. The master of the house—a poor gentleman whose head now—gave me that for cooking his eggs the way he wanted 'em."



Cholly—"I am often mistaken for a distinguished personage."

Grace—"Matt or Battle Chaplin"

Every Other Day.

Murphy sold a pig

"Your pigs is ravenous, Murphy," said a neighbor. "Why don't you give it something to eat

It doesn't have anything to eat today," said Murphy.

"Nothing? When do you feed it?"

"It must wait till tomorrow

"You feed it one day and starve it the next," cried the astonished neighbor. "How ever for?"

"Och, sure," grinned Murphy. "I like to have my bacon with a strake o' fat and a strake o' lean equally one after t'other."

ENEMIES.

True liberty's foe is the pacifist,
No less than the poisonous weed
And there is another
The third little brother,
The stay-at-home-army Jackassifist

Taken at His Word

He (ardently)—"For the love of you I could become anything."

She—"Become a millionaire."

POOR BUTTERFLY.

Dainty creature of delight,
Living jewel of the air,
Flower of flame in flashing flight,
Lake a cherub on a tear!

Pair, ethereal and fine,
Lifted up on gauzy wings,
You it seems, are half divine,
You should scorn all earthly things.

Your petitioner now begs
That to higher realms you'll pass,
And not try a mess of eggs
(Cut worm) on his garden sass

The Littler the Better.

Wife—"Can you let me have a little money, John?"

Hub—"Certainly, my dear. About how little?"

He Got It.

"You seem to be able-bodied and healthy; you ought to be strong enough to work," she remarked acrimoniously.

"Yes, ma'am, I know. And you seem beautiful enough to be on the stage, but evidently you prefer the ample life

He got a square meal without any further reference to work

THE CAT AND THE KING.

In royal robes of purple pride
In golden crown and ermine dight
The king stood up his throne beside,
And thought himself a noble sight
He told the chancellor to bring
The palace cat to see the king
But pussy, in her robes of fur,
Unfettered strength and matchless grace,
Said kings did not look good to her.
Mere leaders of a lower race
"So tell that guy," she said "herais'
I'm busy looking for a mouse!"

Life in the Open.

"We can't imagine what the hardships of the trenches must be."

"I can. Went on an all-day picnic yesterday."

"BEN BOLT"—The Kid That You Were Yourself.

Don't you remember our girl, Ben Bolt,
She played the Accordion splendid
But it made Ma real sad and Pa sort of mad,
So her stay at our house was soon ended

The Poetic Spirit.

"The poetic spirit is sometimes contagious," says Otis Skinner, "a fact that was brought to the attention of a player whose services are frequently enlisted in al fresco performances of Shakespeare.

"He was with a company rehearsing for an open air production of 'As You Like It' near Boston, and the garden wherein he was to play was overlooked by a rising brick edifice. As the players recited their lines, the workmen continued to lay their bricks

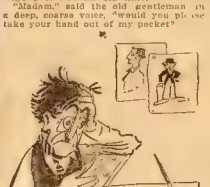
"One afternoon, during a silent pause in the rehearsal, my friend heard a voice from the building exclaim with the utmost gravity:

"'I prithee, malapert, pass me yon brick.'"

Her Mistake.

The other day a young lady got into a crowded street car and was obliged to sit next to an old gentleman out of an overcoat type. When the conductor came to the lady for her fare she exclaimed frantically: "Oh, I have been robbed. I have got nothing in my pocket but a piece of string, some orange peel and an old knife."

"Madam," said the old gentleman in a deep, coarse voice, "would you please take your hand out of my pocket?"



Scribbler—"Not a scenario sold yet! I must open a school for scenario writers."

The Money Was Safe.

Some time ago a little girl rambled into a country grocery and, placing an earthen jar on the counter, asked for ten cents' worth of molasses. Soon the jar was filled and, picking it up, the child started for the door

"Hold on there, youngster," hastily intercepted the grocery man. "Haven't you forgotten something?"

"No, sir, I guess not," answered the girl, pausing and looking around. "What is it?"

"The money for that molasses," answered the grocer. "Don't give it away for an advertisement any more."

"I thought you got the money," was the startling rejoinder of the youngster. "Mother put it in the jar."

Going Slow.

Mother—"I hope you do not allow him to kiss you, as yet?"

Daughter—"I cannot break him of all his foolish habits in a month, can I?"

The Point of View

The Piano Man "How's business?"
The Scissors Grinder "Fine! I've never seen things so dull."—Puck

He Guessed Wrong.

"Yes, gentlemen," said the phrenologist sagaciously shaking the forefinger of his right hand toward the crowd, while his left wandered lovingly over the subject's bumps, "this development indicates extreme modesty, not to say shyness."

The first faint glimmer of a smile dawned upon the subject's face.

"You see," continued the professor, "an instance of the retiring nature of this gentleman is his reluctance to admit the possession of such an amiable characteristic before strangers. He is not one to push himself forward in any way."

The smile gradually widened into a grin.

"Yet, my friends I can assure you his modesty would not prevent his bold championship of truth, if it were required, for there is here a decided indication of downright honesty of purpose. He would boldly speak out what he thought, tho his other prominent characteristic would prevent his failing into exaggeration. No doubt these qualities will be brought into use in this gentleman's calling. Perhaps, sir, you do not mind saying what your occupation is?"

"Oh, dear, not at all, sir," remarked the modest one, rising and lazily stretching out. "I'm the advertising manager of Smiley's world renowned circus, which is the most unparalleled aggregation of equestrian and equilibristic talent the world——"

But the "professor" had vanished without even troubling to pass round the hat.

Honest Landlady.

Boarder (on leaving)—"Madam, you are one of the most honest persons I have ever met."

Landlady—"I'm glad to hear you say that, sir."

Boarder—"Yes; your honesty is conspicuous on the very front of your establishment. Your sign says 'Boarders Taken In'."

Mr. Hoodoody—"That's an odd pair of pants you're wearing. Did you design them yourself?"

Mr. Peewee—"No. You see, it takes two of these tight skirts to make over into one pair of pants and my wife didn't have two exactly that matched."

He Is Willing.

A tramp asked a gentleman for a few pence to buy some bread

"Can't you go into any business that is more profitable than this?" he was asked

"I'd like to open a bank if I could only get the tools," answered the tramp.

Hiram—"Is your boy still pursuing his studies at college?"

Zebulon—"No; he sprained a ligament in his leg."

Not the Dew.

Kathleen had been put out to service, and her mistress liked the rosy face of the young girl. One day Kathleen was sent on an errand to town. She was longer than usual and her mistress stood in the porch as she came thru the field. Kathleen was happy, and her mistress observed

"Why, Kathleen, what a rosy face you have today! You look as if the dew had kissed you."

Kathleen dropped her eyes, and murmured

"Indeed ma'am, but that wasn't his name."

HER DUAL LIFE

Or, The Hidden Lodge

By Ella Martin

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CHAPTER XIII.

HELEN'S MOVE.

AFTER dinner Mr. Tennant came into the room where Theresa sat watching the bird in its cage by the window. He held a package in his hand and the child reached for it eagerly. He was smiling, and to Helen at that moment he looked as innocent as the little girl he adored. But as he undid the package for Theresa she started at the sight of a necklace similar to her own. There was nothing strange about that fact, except that the chain did not appear to be new, which suggested the thought that it had been obtained in the same manner as that in which he had obtained possession of hers.

She was wearing her locket and chain in full view at that very moment, and she went forward and compared it with Theresa's before his eyes; he gave no sign of guilt or confusion.

"You wanted one like mine, Theresa," she said, "and you have your wish; they are very nearly alike."

But Mr. Tennant's countenance did not change, his eyes, as they met hers, did not waver. It all seemed so strange, but it convinced her anew that his was a dual character, due to the influence that dominated him, and that he did not know in one mood what he had done in the other. He was headed for disaster, and only she could save him.

Theresa had put the chain around her neck and laughingly held up her face to kiss her father for the gift. And Helen's desire to help reunite this family and to save them from the clutches of the tall woman and the fate that would overtake them, once the secret of the chambers above was discovered, increased rapidly.

But to lay the case before Dick and Neil would be useless, or worse. She dared not trust to their sympathies. Neither of them was behind the scenes in the sense that she was, and they could never see things from her point of view. No, she must act independently of her allies, and act quickly.

Leaving Mr. Tennant listening to Theresa's prattle, she went out into the hall and waited for him on the landing. Beryl was outside in the grounds somewhere and she feared no interruption from her. She would be safe from intrusion from Rose Cole, also, for that individual had remained in retirement lately. After a short time Mr. Tennant came out.

"I wanted to speak to you," she began, plunging to the heart of the matter at once. "There is going to be a change here very soon—a forced change. A grave danger is hovering over you, and I alone can save you from ruin. If you will trust me and allow me to manage things my own way I'll do so for the sake of the child and your—your wife."

He was watching her with an unwavering, scrutinizing gaze. "I do not understand you," he said coldly.

But Helen would not recede now, tho he had, by his seeming hauteur, made it hard for her to go on.

"To speak plainly," she said, lowering her voice, "the—the secret, whatever it is, in the rooms above, must be hidden before tonight. That done, you are safe."

She watched his face blanch to a gray pallor. He put one trembling hand to his brow and brushed back a stray lock of dark hair, and staggering a little, leaned against the wall.

"Ah, at last," he murmured, "the blow has fallen! I knew it must come; but I thought to be prepared. If only I had been given a little more time—a few weeks——"

Helen caught his arm and shook him. "No, it has not fallen—but it will if you don't act at once. Say nothing to Rose; she may balk your plans, but get whatever is in those rooms out of sight. Can you do it?"

"Yes," he breathed. "But how did you know?"

"Don't ask questions," she advised; "there is no time to waste. For your wife's sake——"

"You were her friend before you came here?" he said; "I see it all now."

"I don't mean Beryl," she answered; "I mean Carmen."

She had not meant to startle him, but a look of terror shone in his eyes almost before she had finished the sentence.

"How came you to know?" he demanded, huskily.

"I want your permission," she said, without replying directly to his question, "to send Beryl and Theresa to the Lodge before night has fallen. They will be safer there. And Theresa must have her mother's care from now on. Things will come to a crisis tonight. I am sincere in wanting to help you," she added, as he continued to stare at her in a mystified way, not quite grasping, seemingly, the import of it all. "I am going to act to the best of my judgement. If I fail in my purpose you will be no worse off than you would have been if I had never tried. Hide your secret and remain away from the house tonight and you will be safe."

Without waiting for an answer she flitted down the stairs and left him standing there in a dazed, stupefied way. She at once sought Beryl on the lawn and the two had a few minutes' talk, and a little later she stood and watched Beryl wheeling Theresa leisurely toward the highway. She ran up to her apartments, but, as she could not see them from there as plainly as she wished, she went carefully up the second flight of steps and stood at the same window that the tall woman had watched from on that other day when she had defied her and threatened her with exposure if she ever dared to tamper with her patients again.

There she waited until she saw Beryl wheeling Theresa back and forth in front of the location that concealed Hidden Lodge from view. After some little delay the lady of the Lodge appeared at the roadside, and the trio were seen to enter the maze of trees and bushes and disappear. And Helen knew that Carmen had taken them in and that the big house would know them no more.

She drew a sigh of relief and turned from the window only to come face to face with Maurice Tennant. She was surprised but not nonplused.

"Oh," she said, in that childish w[ay] hers, "I did not know you were here."

"So I perceived," he returned, a quizzical look on his face.

"I was watching to see if Mrs. Tennant came out in time to meet Beryl and Theresa. She has taken them inside and all will be well."

"Miss Milston, what is Beryl Stanhope to you?"

"An old friend and schoolmate."

"Did you know she was here when you came?"

"No, I did not even suspect until she came to me out under the trees, not knowing any one was there."

"Then how came you so familiar with my affairs? Did Beryl tell you anything?"

"No, she knew nothing herself; she has been kept in a state bordering on hypnotism ever since she came under the evil influence of Rose Cole. Ay, even before that. That influence, transmitted to her thru you, won her from her allegiance to another and compelled her to elope with you."

"Tell me one thing: "Were you sent here as a detective? Or were you doing some amateur work just for experiment and adventure? In other words, how came you to familiarize yourself with my affairs?"

"Neither. Conditions in this house fairly shrieked at me from all quarters. Both you and Miss Cole committed yourselves the first evening. I confess I have an inquiring, analytical mind, or I wouldn't have learned so much in so short a time. It is well for you that it all happened just as it did. Had I not got behind the scenes so completely, I should not have been impelled to reach for a hand to save you from the law, which, without doubt, would be your fate. No court of law would believe the story, were it told to them just as I see it and believe it to be. There were forces at work here before I came that would have proved your undoing but for my intervention."

"How do you know that?" he inquired, skeptically.

"In just the same way that I know the rest—all about you and [Carmen]. I simply ran into it, and couldn't have helped seeing it with my eyes shut. But there is one thing I would like you to explain. It is some of my business, the all the rest is not, except that part of it that affects Beryl: How came my necklace—the one I am wearing, and which was taken from me on the train by an experienced pickpocket—to be in your possession? It dropped from your pocket when you withdrew your handkerchief on the night I called you to Theresa's bedside?"

He looked at the chain about her neck in a dazed manner. Then he said: "I do not know. It seems that I have seen it before; but I have no recollection of ever having it in my possession."

"Do you not remember seeing me on the train the day I came here?"

"No."

"The man who took my chain wore a mustache. You do not."

He started at her words, but did not speak.

"Was it you?"

"It might have been—it must have been, if, as you say, I had it in my pocket afterward," he admitted. "You are right, Miss Milston; the authorities of the law would neither understand nor sympathize. I have not been myself since the wreck of the ship which was to bring me and my family to this country, that we might escape the attentions of one who had set on me her number, even before I met and loved Carmen. But alas! unknown to us she was on the same steamer, and she managed to save my life. Carmen was picked up by another lifeboat, but we both supposed she was drowned. I had received a blow on the head, and to this I attributed my dazed consciousness. But afterward I became convinced that my soul was in the tentacles of an octopus in human form."

His face quivered for a moment. "Yes," he went on, "since you know so much of it is true about me and mine there is no use to dissemble. Rose Cole—her real name I do not know—is a Russian countess, an Italian by birth. She is an exile from her husband's land, suspected of having done away with the

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Count in some mysterious manner. I felt an aversion for her from the first. But now, as you see, I am subject to her will whether she is at my side or not. Now you know why I brought Beryl here as my wife. She wanted more power over me, wanted to make me amenable to the law, so that I would not dare disobey her during the times I was out from under her influence, which became more frequent, until she feared she was losing her control over my actions.

"Every theft, such as taking your necklace, she has compelled me to commit, by will power and suggestion. I shall never be free from her baleful influence until she is dead."

"Or confined in a madhouse," supplemented Helen, "where she belongs. For she is mad, at least on one subject—love of you."

"Yes, and it was all her own doing, our intimacy. I never loved her, and she knew it. But she sought to bind me by ties I could not break. She was not successful until she resorted to hypnotism and compelled me to commit robberies that I might be in her power. I believe now that she intended to do away with Beryl and Theresa both, and marry me in spite of everything."

There was nothing incongruous to Helen in this conversation; it seemed a part of things. He as well as the tall woman had begun it that first night by attempting to explain things—or rather to mystify her by attempting to explain the things they were sure she would encounter. It did not occur to her to be afraid of him, tho she had once wondered if, like Bluebeard, he had not hidden the bodies of slain wives behind those locked doors.

And now when he moved toward the room at the front of the house—the one which she knew contained the heavy chests—and invited her to enter, she followed him without hesitation.

"I will show you," he said, "the only articles that are of interest to me;" and selecting a key from a number of them on a ring which he carried in his pocket, he opened the chests and displayed an assortment of female effects which he explained belonged to his wife.

"These things will not need be hidden," Helen said, looking directly at him.

He moved uneasily and glanced toward the door connecting the two rooms.

"It is getting late," Helen said, recognizing the awkardness of the situation in which he was placed. "There is no time to be lost." And without waiting for a reply, she withdrew and went quickly down the stairs. She heard him murmur his thanks and close and lock the door.

"And so," she mused, "Miss Cole, or rather the Countess, told me the truth after all, tho, of course, not the whole truth. They are his Carmen's personal effects. She expected me to be satisfied with that explanation, it being more plausible because founded on truth."

Before going to the kitchen she sought the housekeeper in her own apartments so lately renovated. The maid admitted her only after gaining permission from her mistress. She found the tall woman reclining on a couch near the window, overtired from her exertions of the day. The difference in the arrangement of things was apparent to the nurse at a glance. There was also a flush on the cheeks of the stately woman that did away with the need of cosmetics. Her black hair was arranged in a becoming coiffure, and the eyes that matched it in blackness shone with a new light—the light of hope.

She was clad in a sort of lounging robe that was airy and light and graceful. And there was a smile on her lips that lent a charm of beauty to her countenance. Evidently she had had an audience with the master of the house, for she seemed in good spirits. She motioned Helen to be seated.

"He likes the place better now," she began; "he says it is more cheerful, and one's feelings are influenced by one's surroundings. But he objects to entertainments being given here. It would look strange and out of place, he thinks, for us to seek the society of the neighborhood, since no one has noticed us since we came. So there will be no one to enjoy the change but ourselves."

"You have no intimate friends?" asked Helen.

"No. We rented the place partly furnished, and kept the servants that were here when we took possession. And we have not tried to make friends, or even acquaintances. There are no near neighbors, the nearest house being the Lodge, which is uninhabited, it is said."

Helen had given no thought to the possible fate of this woman when the blow fell. She was not concerned in helping her out of the mire into which she had sunk while endeavoring to drag others down into its depths. Helen knew that the gloom and depression Rose Cole had created was part of her plan to cause Beryl and Theresa to droop and fade like flowers broken from the stem. She had rescued them and led the schemer into another path, one in which she was deluded into thinking she would win the love of the man she already held in her clutches.

Helen had not eaten with the family since removing Beryl to her rooms. And now she excused herself and went as usual to the kitchen to prepare dinner for herself and patients, as she still called them. Jacques was busy with the meal, one of the maids helping him.

"Stand aside," Helen ordered him banteringly; "the nurse wants to get herself something to eat."

"You'd better let me prepare it, then," he replied, "if you want it to be really fit. You might get ptomaine poisoning from anything you could cook yourself." He gave her a suggestive glance which reminded her that she was to feign illness that evening.

She carried the tray to her room just as if her patients were there. After eating what she wanted of it she carried the tray back covered with a large napkin, just as she was in the habit of doing, and when no one was looking she managed to dispose of Beryl's and Theresa's share by dumping it into the garbage can. As Jacques was alone now she asked him at what hour he had planned for her to pretend illness.

"Oh, any time will do. But you are not to be in need of a doctor till about midnight. Then you may ring for Jean and send her to me with a request for me to telephone to town for a physician. You must groan and seem to be in awful pain, you know."

Helen smiled. She was not sure her ruse would be a success; she had never done much pretending. But she answered: "I'll do it, if I have to stuff the sheet in my mouth to keep from laughing."

"See here!" he cried. "Don't you dare make a failure of this. The doctor is waiting at the station for this midnight

call, and you mustn't balk our plans by failing to do your part."

Helen immediately saw light, but she was not sure she was correct in her surmise, so she made no remark. She could afford to wait developments. Of course she could not refuse her assistance. She had been so willing to help in the beginning that now she must go on with it. A detective would, in all probability, visit the house in the guise of a doctor. And now, for the first time since coming to this place, she was excited. Until this moment she had not been greatly involved. Now she found herself mixed up in the affair and working for the wrong side—upholding the evildoers. No one, not knowing the whole story as she had imbibed it, would understand her motive or sympathize with the position she had taken. It was too intangible to explain, and her part in whatever took place tonight must remain a secret in her own breast, if she did not want to be regarded by her friends as a sentimental fool. She was playing a double part, for she was elected to follow instructions almost blindly.

As her excitement increased she began to feel dizzy. After all, it might turn out to be no fake illness. She chose the outer room to sleep in, as she wanted it supposed that Beryl and Theresa were in the chamber beyond, which she had locked. She retired late, but she did not disrobe; she wanted to be prepared for any emergency, so she donned a dark kimono over her thin summer gown and merely lay down under the covers. She began to feel really sick. Was it with dread? Or had Jacques put some drug in her coffee when she was not looking? She laughed at the idea and closed her eyes.

Suddenly she awoke and sat upright. She had indeed fallen asleep just when sleep was the furthest from her intentions. She glanced at the clock and saw that it was near midnight. She had failed her allies.

Just then she heard footsteps coming up the stairs. Two men paused on the landing outside her door and held a whispered conversation. Ah, she understood! Jacques had phoned for the doctor, anyway. He hadn't really needed any orders; all he wanted was her consent to furnish an excuse to get his man into the house. It was even better that he should wait until Jean had retired. She began to tremble lest she should fail to act her part convincingly, but remembered that it was not necessary now, since Jean was eliminated from the role.

She sank back among the pillows almost fainting as she heard the door open, and felt really sick with excitement and nervousness, knowing that she would be looked upon as a failure. She lifted shrinking eyes, and saw a tall, well-built man, with brown hair and hazel eyes with a glint of brown in them, like Neil's, with a satchel such as physicians carry in his hand, advancing toward her. He was clean-shaven and handsome. She recognized him instantly, just as she had expected, and her head fell back as if she was exhausted.

"Dick!" she breathed, and was silent—only staring into the face that had captivated her girlish fancy years ago. She was really faint from emotion. It was not necessary to feign anything now.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MYSTERY ROOM.

HELEN realized now that matters were nearing a climax. She remembered that Richard Dallas was a graduated physician, as well as a detective, and she knew his visit to this house in the capacity of a doctor meant more than would appear on the surface to any one not behind the scenes. He had barely begun his practice when Beryl disappeared, and he had devoted most of his time since to a search for her. Nearly a year ago it was now, and he had lost all these months of practice because of what had happened to her. And now he was here to obtain evidence against the man who had abducted her that he might cause his arrest and free her from his power.

And she had helped this man to escape the consequences of his wrongdoing—she who should have been Dick's best friend by reason of her admiration for him and her friendship for Beryl. But having taken her stand for Mr. Tennant and his wife and child—not including Rose Cole, the real criminal—with her eyes open, she did not intend to withdraw now. She had not understood the situation thoroly when she agreed to help hunt down her employer; she was thinking then only of Beryl's welfare.

There was no use of trying to explain anything so subtle to Dick and Neil, or of trying to win them over to her way of thinking, even if she could make them understand, she knew. She must protect the innocent and allow only the guilty to suffer—if the real culprit was discovered. She did not intend to denounce Rose Cole, except if it should prove necessary in order to save the Tennants. She had not come to this place to bring down disaster upon its inmates, and it was not she who had really done so

Richard Dallas, M. D., with a professional air drew a chair to her bedside, felt her pulse in all seriousness, turned to his grip, and taking a vial from its capacious depths, he placed some tablets, with directions for taking, on a stand near by. Then he rose and looked at her smilingly.

"So," he said, "you have become a detective? Neil tells me you will prove a wonderful aid to us."

"Neil is too optimistic—he always was. However, my work is done—all that I am going to do. While you two were delaying, seeking evidence against the man who stole her from me. Show me the way to those rooms, and if there is anything there which will convict him of a crime, I will hand him over to the law to deal with. Otherwise, I will attend to his case myself."

He paused and glanced toward the bedroom, then back to Helen. "Where is Beryl?" he asked.

"You will find her at Aunt Saphronia's when you seek her, after your raid on this house is over?"

He looked at her keenly. "How did you know, Helen?"

"Oh, you thought to make use of me and yet keep me in the dark as much as possible, did you? If you please I am not Neil's deputy. I am working alone on this case. Let him show you to the rooms. You forget that I am sick."

Again he smiled.

"I mean it," she insisted; "I am really too weak to stand. All this excitement and suspense have used me up. Take back the tablets you have left for an imaginary illness—there is no reason for pretense now—and give me something to quiet my nerves."

This time he laughed outright. "Helen, you are showing the white feather. You are not in need of nerve medicine. What ails you is simply cowardice, and I wouldn't have thought it of you."

"You are right," replied Helen; "fear and dread are what have made me weak. But I am not afraid of what you think I am—I mean of what you will find upstairs. Why need you search the house? Why need you do anything? Beryl is safe. The wife this man thought dead when he married her is living, and Beryl is free. She was never his wife in any sense whatever. Go to her and she will tell you all."

"And leave the months of captivity unavenged? You don't know me, Helen. I have authority to search this house. If Mr. Tennant interrupts me while I am thus occupied I shall arrest him. If I find that which we suspect is hidden there, we will raid the house and arrest every soul in it."

"Then," said Helen, with a wan smile, "I'd better get out while I can."

"It is too late. The house is surrounded." Then, with a quizzical smile: "And you are ill, remember."

Helen sprang to her feet, tore off the kimono and stood before him fully dressed. Her eyes were flashing.

"I am not ill now!" she cried. "But I won't go with you upstairs. I don't like being a detective and sneaking around to find out things. I have tried it and I know. My being deputized was a joke, and I knew it all the time. Neil, alias the chief, alias Jacques, thought to make a cat's paw out of me, without enlightening me as to what was going to take place. He didn't even tell me who the physician he meant to summon was; but I mistrusted. You and Neil can handle the job without my assistance. I don't like the people here particularly well, but I'm not hunting any of them down, criminals or not. Understand?"

Richard Dallas looked astonished for an instant; but finally he smiled and said:

"You little spitfire! I think I do. And I'll try to manage without you."

"I got along very well without your assistance. I liberated Beryl—the only thing that really needed to be done—before you got here. But I am going to stay and see the thing thru. You'll probably find a lot of old discarded furniture, or something equally mysterious, in those rooms on the third floor, where, according to superstitious servants, ghosts are wont to walk. Tell me about it, if you do."

He went out of the room without answering, and she heard him talking in low tones to Neil, who was stationed on the landing outside to watch for intruders. She heard him ascend the second flight of steps, after receiving directions from Neil, and she collapsed into the nearest chair.

"Well, I am in it to a certain extent," she murmured. "I have been on both sides; but now, for my own sake, and because I have done everything that I was able to do for any of them, I am just going to remain neutral. He'll find the stolen goods, most likely, for Mr. Tennant never could have removed them from the house. And then they will arrest him—if they find him. If it wasn't for Theresa I shouldn't care so much, tho I would like to see Rose Cole balked in her game and the Tennants all happy again. Well, I am out of it now. There is nothing more I can do, except to worry."

She did that for about five minutes; then inactivity got on her nerves, and she sprang up and out into the corridor, darted past Neil, who only gazed after her in wonderment, and sped on up the stairs straight to the third floor. She must see for herself what Dick would find. The door was closed and she hesitated for a moment, then opened it and paused on the threshold. She found him standing in a vacant room. He held in his hand an electric lantern and was flashing it in every direction, gazing around in a mystified manner.

"Oh," she said in genuine surprise, "is this the mystery these vacant rooms? Here is where the ghosts stay, I suppose. But really, Dick, what did you expect to find?"

She was trembling, and afraid that she looked as guilty as she felt.

"Well, Helen," he replied, slowly, "to tell the truth, I expected to find things that are certainly not here. I am surely puzzled. Neil saw what he thought were gems thru the keyhole. But there is another room here." He opened the door as he spoke and stepped inside, flashing his light about. Helen hastened to explain.

"Oh, I've been in there!" she exclaimed. "It is nothing but a storeroom, and those chests contain things that belong to his wife, whom for a long time he believed

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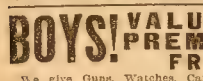
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drowned at sea, so his housekeeper told me."

Dick examined the chests, but found them locked. Helen was on nettles lest the loot should have been transferred to these chests as a last resort; but was relieved when Dick, tho trying every key on his ring, could find none that would fit any of the chests.

"Oh, well," remarked Helen, in a bored tone, "it's all flatted out. There is no great secret here, after all. It is merely a storeroom."

She noted the sharp look her companion gave her, and wondered if she had not overdone it by assuming an indifference she did not feel. "I am going back to bed," she added, "and this time I am going to undress. There'll be no raid tonight, of course."

"There'll be a raid, tho, not only of this place, but of Hidden Lodge. However it will be safe for you to retire. We can do nothing tonight, for evidently the one we seek is not here. Neil reports that he is not in his room, and the car is missing. He has probably gone on one of his night trips."

"He is hardly ever at home long at a time. He goes to the city quite often."

"Yes, so we have learned. And after each visit there we have a number of robberies reported to us."

"Oh," said Helen, pursing her lips, "is that it? Is that what you are after him for? Did you expect to find booty in these rooms?"

In her surprise at learning that Dick had so much knowledge concerning Mr. Tennant's motoring, Helen almost forgot that she had known it was true, and so her manner seemed genuine.

"How many servants are there here?" Dick asked.

"Three maids, the chauffeur, the gardener and an errand boy—and—" she smiled—"the cook and a nurse."

"The chauffeur is also missing," said Dick. "It is possible they have removed the stolen goods to the place called Hidden Lodge. It is in this vicinity, I am told; and however hidden it may be, I think I can find my way to it."

"The chauffeur has probably not gone any farther than the station," Helen replied. "Mr. Tennant goes from there to the city by train, and phones to have the car meet him at the station again when he returns. At least he often does so."

"Well, in that case I will wait a while to see if he returns this time," he answered reflectively. "But Helen, if Beryl is no longer here, why do you remain, now that you know what sort of place this is?"

"I stayed to cover Beryl's flight. No one has missed her yet, not even your deputy, the chef," she answered, with a triumphant smile. "It didn't take him into my confidence, either."

Dick placed his hands on her shoulders and looked down into her eyes affectionately. "Thank you," he said, "for all you have done for Beryl. And say, little girl, try to make it up with Neil. He's as fond of you as ever; and I see you are the same little rebel as in your younger days. I must bid you good night now, and leave you in Neil's care. You may need protection yet before this thing is over."

Helen let him go without protest, but how she wished he would postpone his visit to Hidden Lodge until she had had time to warn the Tennants of their impending danger. She did not retire at once, but switched off the light and seated herself by the window to watch the front yard. A little later she saw Dick appear and several men gather round him on the lawn. After a moment's consultation they walked toward the highway, where she surmised an automobile was waiting for them. She strained her eyes to see in which direction they went, and nearly exclaimed aloud when she saw the car turn and drive toward Hidden Lodge.

This remarkable story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. Let us hear from you at once.

CLAIMING EXEMPTION.

"My dear, I'm so glad to see you," greeted Mrs. Connery.

Her caller was a young woman whose wedding Mrs. Connery had attended some few years ago, but who believed that marriage should not submerge a woman's individuality; hence, the two young people had built their nest in a family boarding-house, and took the same train down to business each morning.

"But," asked Mrs. Connery, after they were comfortably seated, "how is it that you're not at work?"

"I'm not working any more," explained the caller.

"Not working!" Mrs. Connery looked her surprise. "Why, I thought you were just crazy about your position—didn't you get a big increase the first of the year?"

"Yes," the visitor answered complacently. "Everything has been coming my way of late. Being secretary to Mr. O'Malley is the most interesting work—there's nothing routine about it and my salary was exceptional for a woman. Why, Bob felt the least little teeny bit jealous when I got my last raise!"

"I should think he would!" returned Mrs. Connery, dryly. "It's not very comforting for a man to know that his wife is utterly independent of him—that she's capable of earning as much as he does."

The caller stirred uneasily. "Well, no, I suppose not——"

"But," continued Mrs. Connery, "you haven't told me why you're not at work."

"Oh," explained the caller, reluctantly, "you know that Bob was drafted, and I couldn't bear to see him go to war—so I quit my work, and he's claiming exemption on the ground of having a dependent wife."

Mrs. Connery looked her scorn. She started to speak, then waited for her visitor to continue.

"It isn't right, Mrs. Connery," the caller went on, now that she was sure of her hostess' disapproval, "for married men to be called, when there are hundreds of idle fellows without assignment roaming the streets with nothing to do. In many instances military training would be the making of them. But Bob has been with his firm for years, and is just now getting to a place where he can see big things ahead; he had begun on a very small salary and has worked hard. Now he's drafted—all his years of concentration amount to nothing!"

"Some men feel that serving their country is the really big thing," Mrs. Connery remarked. "I confess I'm rather surprised at Bob—he's the last man I'd ever dream would hide behind a woman's skirts!"

The caller flushed. "It's not Bob's fault—you do him an injustice. He had no desire to evade his duty—but—I—well, I talked him into it."

"Then you're the slacker! I'm thoroly ashamed of you, Cornelia," said Mrs. Connery. "Here you are, a woman capable of earning more than some whole families live on—doing congenial work in pleasant surroundings. There's many a poor little woman whose heart is breaking because her husband's going to war, and they're comforting those men and telling them not to worry, that they can get along all right. This isn't a one man's fight, my dear, it means the rallying of every citizen of the United States to his country's call, and we should be mighty thankful for the brave American men who throng our streets in khaki waiting for marching orders."

"But, Mrs. Connery——"

"There's no 'buts' about it. You've got to grow, Cornelia! You've the making of a mighty fine woman, but you're thoroly selfish. You denied Bob the pleasure of a real home, which we all know he craved—you wanted to keep your independence, and the role of housewife didn't suit.

"Now you're amply able to take care of yourself. You don't need Bob that way. You can get your position back, can't you?"

Cornelia nodded. "Then be a real woman. Telephone Mr. O'Malley you've changed your mind. Tell Bob to go—send him away with smiles on your lips, even if your heart is breaking. Millions of hearts all over the country are breaking, my dear—you're not alone. Every woman has got to stand by the colors, just the same as the men. And tell me, Cornelia, could you bear to think of any other flag than our own Stars and Stripes floating from the statue of Liberty?"

Cornelia's eyes flashed. "I should say not!"

"Then, my dear, when Bob comes home tonight just let him know that there's nothing on earth looks as good to you as him in a khaki uniform."

And after her caller had gone Mrs. Connery said to herself, "I believe I let the light in there!"

Faith Was Weak.

During an extended drought in the land that inspires the ragtime song writers, the "Rev'end" George Washington called a gathering of his colored brethren to supplicate the Lord for rain. Before he opened his sermon the "Rev'end" surveyed his congregation critically, and with increasing dissatisfaction. At last he lamented:

"De lack oh faith oh you' niggers is scandalous and sinful, and makes my heart sore and weary, and afeared for your souls! Heah we hab gathered to beg de Lord to stop de drought dat is burning up our fields, and to bless us with rain in abundance. And not one—no, sah!—not one oh yo' disgraceful sinners had faith enough to bring an umbrella to go home with!"

His Card.

A bridal party, amid a shower of rice and popcorn, entered the railway station shortly before 11 o'clock one night. The bride and groom rushed thru the lobby and down the waiting-room to the far end to their train with a group of shouting friends close behind.

The bride kissed her friends good-by and the groom shook hands with his pals. All was joy and then——

Two cops halted the newlyweds just as they were about to pass thru the gate to their train.

"Just a minute," said one sternly to the young man, "have you registered?"

The laughter ceased, the bride's smile faded, the groom reddened, stammered an apology and asked the policeman to step aside as he had no time for trivial matters.

"Nothing trivial about this," shot back the gruff policeman. "You produce your registration card or you go to the station with us."

Heated argument followed in which the groom pleaded to be permitted to call the police chief and explain, and then threatened to sue the patrolmen; the mothers interceded and the bride started to cry.

Then the "rude" cop laughed, the groom "registered" consternation, the friends shouted, the crowd in the station which had gathered around to see the excitement smiled and the couple hurried thru the gate.

It had been a frame-up.

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CASSIE'S MAN-TRAP

BY MASON RAY

A brisk story of fish and fishermen and certain jewels, together with love and fun and fighting.

CASSIE airily waved a hand at the barrel-top table as if invoking magic.

"Breakfast is ready, Jack," she announced. Her clear young voice was gay with the unreasoning joy of mere existence. "This time I fried the fish twice," she declared, "and there are no raw spots in the middle."

"If we could only repeat on eating them," mourned her brother. "I can't get on with my picture and stop to fish And we've got to have fish or go hungry. Looks like the horns of a dilemma, which makes me wonder how many horns a dilemma sprouts. Every day or so up crops a different pair until ours rival the eyes of Argus."

"A truce to care!" bargained his sister. "See; the lake's all tumbling blues, the sky glows with sunlight, and your valleys a sylvan dream. Haste to your painting."

"Tainted, it will look like a nightmare," gloomily predicted her brother.

He pushed back his rickety chair from the improvised table, adjusted his artist's outfit and proceeded to the spot where he daily worked at transferring a bit of the magnificent landscape to a huge canvas. In the foreground "lady birches" and evergreens in exquisite grouping framed the view at right and left. In diminishing perspective lay the hill-walled lake with an enchanting island of miniature size in the near view and, far away, the bridged narrows. This was to be Jack McGurrin's introduction to millionaires who desired something worth while instead of ancient smudges. He intended it to create a sensation in the world of art and make his fortune; and his fortune was very, very badly in need of being made.

Left to herself, Cassie washed up the cracked dishes, which had been left-overs from the household effects of some tenant, and arranged them on a shelf. The old house, long deserted, gave forth ghostly sounds as her light feet tripped hither and thither about her morning tasks. Windows, which lacked panes of glass, were mere frames for the lovely outdoors beyond them. To Cassie the lush beauty of June irresistibly beckoned; so, armed with Jack's fish-pole and creel, she presently emerged from the weather-stained building that surmounted a grassy hill overlooking the lake, while light green forest rimmed the neglected farm at the rear and at either side. With Jack's extra cap jauntily poised on her ash-blonde hair, and gray-blue eyes agtint with anticipated sport, she crashed thru a margin of the eastern woods and came to the bank of a shimmering creek whose surface was crossed untidily by fallen timbers. On one of these Cassie gingerly made her way to midstream in imitation of Jack's position when he reeled in fish There she firmly planted her booted feet and cast out her line.

It was new and precarious business, but she wanted fish. She wished to save Jack the trouble of catching them; and to save Jack trouble had become her chief ambition. His hours were precious. The years of art study their grandfather made possible for Jack must not be wasted. His masterpiece must be finished in time for the early autumn exhibit To this end the brother and sister had exiled themselves to the tumbledown dwelling Cassie had just tidied up for the day and the isolated acres After long expecting Grandfather McGurrin to bequeath them a comfortable income, it was discovered after his death that he had left them nothing; at least, nothing but this abandoned farm, which Jack described as being less than nothing.

Even their grandfather's lawyers were astonished at the disappearance of the old man's fortune, until they discovered that he had invested his cash in jewels. Lacking confidence in banks, and even distrusting currency, he had withdrawn his funds and had purchased uncut diamonds. Afterward he hid the precious stones, and no one could guess the place of concealment or find a line of writing that might explain the mystery. His act seemed the impulse of dementia, especially as he left named Jack and Cassie as heirs to this missing fortune.

Jack, arriving penniless from Paris and anxious to try his hand at a time-consuming picture, plumbed the depths of despair until his devoted sister suggested a way out. It meant a summer at this out-of-the-world nook. The sale of a few pieces of furniture provided Jack's working outfit, tickets to the place of exile and a trifle over for food. Not a girl in Cassie's mirth-loving, pampered set would have advocated such hardship. But in Cassie's make-up was a strain of practical Scotch thrift and persistence which dominated her brother's artistic temperament; so the plan materialized, and now the nearby trout stream materially aided in supplying free nourishing food. Therefore Cassie anxiously watched the bob in hopes of snaring raw material for the next meal.

Suddenly and unexpectedly she was successful. Something sprang into the air that glittered like a handful of Grandfather McGurrin's hidden diamonds, then it dived into the stream and violently jerked the line. Tightly clutching her pole, Cassie made a valiant attempt to maintain her balance, failed and plunged into the creek. Next moment some one grasped her in strong hands

He bore her to the bank.

and bore her to the bank, where she stood dripping but still clutching her pole.

"You're in an awful mess," commented her rescuer, a dark-skinned young man in soaked khaki overalls and a blue woolen shirt.

"Anyhow, I saved my fish," gloated Cassie, and began to reel it in. "There it is on the hook!" she told him. "Please take it off. And thank you for helping us both out. I'm afraid you're in an awful mess, too."

"I was wading," he explained, "and wet, anyway. Why," he broke off, "you caught a beauty!"

It was. The trout was a sort of bird-of-paradise fish, all dotted with red and tinted a golden brown and glistening from its native element.

"Oh!" cried Cassie, entranced at the sight. Her eyes sparkled, her pretty face glowed. "I bet it weighs a pound," she estimated. "It's enough for dinner. That is dinner for two," she inhospitably amended, remembering the defects of her cupboard and the fact that Jack must not have his mind distracted by strangers. "If it were more or—or we were differently situated, Mr. ——"

"Gorton," supplied the fisherman. "Tom Gorton."

"And our name is McGurrin," Cassie told him. "My brother Jack and I are living in grandfather's old farmhouse there while Jack paints a landscape. It's very particular work. He can't be interrupted. That's why I was fishing alone."

The young man relieved her of finishing the reason for not asking him to dinner by showing where he stood sheltered by willows when she fell; but as he talked his dark eyes regarded her with intense interest. She was glad when he withdrew himself and his gaze and waded upstream with his rod and line. The line was fastened to a long bamboo pole of cheap design. The man's clothing was rough and inexpensive. Doubtless he was a young farmer of the neighborhood. She dismissed him from her mind and hastened home to change her wet clothing and prepare luncheon on the rusty stove which remained in the deserted house because no one had coveted it. By its aid she managed to fry her fish, boil potatoes and toast a few large square crackers. It was not much of a meal, even with a pot of tea, but Jack ate in absorbed silence. His mind was back in the improvised, half-walled shelter where he attempted to give mere woods and water the soul of summer. That was why Cassie said nothing about her accident, the stranger and her beautiful trout.

That night—their third—the mysterious noise and strange doings began. First, it was nothing more disturbing than noise. Cassie, having selected for herself an upstairs room at the rear, heard it and fled to Jack in his large room upstairs at the front.

"What's that grating sound?" she demanded.

But Jack, having worried himself to exhaustion, slept soundly and she refrained from waking him. Back in her cot she lay listening intently while crickets chirped and warping boards of the old house creaked in velvet darkness that seemed to envelop her like something tangible. Beneath the familiar and expected sounds she distinguished dull footfalls and queer, faint movements. She was sure they never before had formed part of the night symphony. Instead of terrifying her into a state of paralytic inaction, they aroused her to stealthy investigation. She tiptoed on bare feet to the rear window and peered out. Not a thing was to be discerned in the blackness of the moonless night; but receding footsteps seemed to pad, pad on the thick grass; then all was still. She returned to bed and overslept. It was Jack who built the fire and reported a neighborly act.

"Somebody's given us a pan of brook trout," he shouted up the decrepit stairs. "Mighty good of 'em, but, ye gods, we'll taste fish in our dreams!"

So that explained the mystery. Tom Gorton had brought her a catch of fish. She hastened to the kitchen and, as she cooked the dainty offering, she told Jack about the young farmer who had doubtless considered one specimen inadequate. She remembered saying something to that effect when he removed it from the hook. But why had he brought those in the night? Why not wait until morning?

"Probably bashful," explained Jack. "Or maybe your Tom Gorton had nothing to do with it. Maybe they're manna from heaven," said he, and promptly relapsed into silent contemplation of atmosphere, color values and impressionistic effects.

As a companion in exile he left much to be desired Cassie was lonesome. Despite brilliant sunshine and exquisite surroundings the day dragged. She might have fished, but they were abundantly supplied. So she occupied herself by scrubbing up the lower rooms with water from the reluctant pump. That done, she examined fabrics from her trunk that curtained the broken windows and gave the place a homelike touch. If Cassie's lot was cast in an igloo her busy hands would transform its ugliness into a home; so, with sleeves at elbow and skirt pinned back, she sang and labored. Even the tin-can littered yard shared in the general cleaning. Dead branches from shade trees were neatly piled, and the offending tins were tossed under the house where eroding winds had swept away the earth and exposed a yawning cellar. All this resulted in tired muscles and sound sleep.

It might have been past midnight when she was disturbed by rattling noises and a voice. The voice seemed to be swearing. She bounded to her feet and looked from her window. Nothing was to be seen—at first. But her straining ears heard a commotion among the rusty tins she had cast into the cellar. Then her widely staring eyes caught sight of a queer light near the rear forest. At long intervals it glowed briefly like some gigantic firefly. Maybe the creek flireflies were large. Her attention was diverted by hearing the purr of an approaching auto. Its headlights soon pierced the gloom and lighted rods of highway that passed back of the house. Opposite the house it stopped. She heard running feet, the door of the tonneau clicked open, then shut and the car darted onward.

What did they want? Who were they? She would have discussed the singular happening with Jack, but wakefulness destroyed his next day's ability to work. He said a disturbed night made him feel like a fool. So she crept back to her cot without the relief of talking the matter over, and actually managed to sleep. Next morning she discovered another fish offering on the back porch. Again Gorton had visited them in the night. That might account for some of the padding steps, but it didn't account for rattling among the rusty cans. She questioned Jack.

"Did you hear men and an auto snooping around in the night?" she demanded.

"No," said he. "But if an auto was snooping round here I'd surely have heard it. Why?"

"Because," said Cassie, blurting out her fears, "I thought I heard men rattling among those tins I threw down cellar."

"Neighborhood dogs burying fish heads," explained Jack.

"But I heard them swear!" cried Cassie.

"No wonder," agreed Jack. "What you heard was probably the haunting souls of tenants who starved trying to make a living. They're resentful."

He refused to help her examine the premises for proof of her midnight invaders. Tom Gorton's fish offering and bone burying dogs, to his mind, answered her conundrum. After he departed to his open-air studio, she entered the cellar by lifting a plank door outside that slanted steeply like a roof and fastened with a rusty hasp. Looking eagerly about, she noted a row of wooden bins, intended for vegetables, and a pile of loose boards that had once been another row of the same. Among the tinware that had jingled during midnight hours was loose-flung dirt of the earth floor It might have been the work of dogs. She would like to ask some one's opinion. And that some one was Tom Gorton. Arrayed in her short-skirted corduroy, high boots and Jack's cap, she set forth, hoping to waylay the young farmer who frittered away his time and gave away his fish. She found him on a log in midstream in the act of landing a trout.

"We're enjoying the fish you gave us," she called to him. "I'm here to thank you."

"I didn't know what else to do with them," he told her, as he came ashore. "And you spoke of your brother not having time——"

"Because he's painting a picture," supplied Cassie.

She noticed her idle farmer was tall and straight and darkly handsome, that his gaze was direct and his expression frank. Instinctively she trusted him and at once poured forth her story of the night. As she talked, Gorton's black eyes became thoughtful. He asked questions. Was she sure more than one man joined the autoist? About this he was insistent. But he agreed with Jack that the rattling tinware meant prowling dogs. He warned her to keep away from them. Stray dogs might bite. His assurance that autos traveled the country roads day or night deprived her car incident of importance. She went home cheered, but prejudiced against dogs

After luncheon she provided herself with the hammer and nails they had brought along for shelf-making and again visited the cellar. She'd put an end to the racket of dogs among tin cans. The boards of dismembered bins could be nailed over the rotted opening. It was not a ladylike job. Only her dislike of fish-burying dogs and the proverb about idle hands can account for her afternoon of vigorous pounding. Upright boards were fastened to the low joist and the sound part of the wall with a reckless extravagance of driven nails

"For the love of Mike," protested Jack at supper time, "what was the row? Sounded like nonunion carpenters and a boiler factory."

"Sorry I disturbed you, Jackie," said his sister. "I was just stopping out stray dogs. They keep me awake."

"If they keep me awake," threatened the artist, "I'll up and have a shot at them"

Nailing up the cellar seemed effective. Not a sound broke the stillness that blissful night except the distant frog orchestra, insects and groaning timbers of the ancient dwelling. The following day Cassie boasted to Tom Gorton of her triumph over neighborhood dogs.

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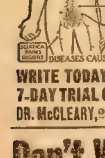

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Also she suggested daylight hours for his offerings, and as she talked he seemed to listen in amazement, seemed about to burst into astounded denial, but thought better of it and promised diurnal habits. Consequently, he arrived with a string of glittering beauties at four of the afternoon, and lingered while they talked of Jack's picture and other [illegible] and finally books. He had been gone an hour before Cassie realized the breadth and depth of the young farmer's book lore. Seemingly he had read whole libraries and remembered the best work of each author She mentioned this to Jack.

"A rural bookworm," disposed he. "That's nothing to wonder at."

So each afternoon Tom Gorton brought fish and stopped to ask about prowling dogs and talk of books. It passed the time, and Cassie looked forward to the hour until Jack rebelled at broiled trout and relieved his feelings by hinting at a fishy courtship.

After that Cassie tramped the woods for recreation, and one day stumbled upon a curious find. It was a camp, a remote hunter's camp, consisting of a brush hut, a simple outfit of cooking utensils and an outdoor fireplace. It was a very untidy camp, for the ground was strewn with fish heads. Some one besides her idle farmer fished at the creek. Unaccountably she was alarmed at the nearness of these sportsmen and determined to mention them to Tom. Mentally she named him Tom, which is significant. And she unconsciously relied upon his judgment and trusted him, which would have alarmed Jack more than the sportsmen's hut frightened his quarry—had he known it. But she did not discuss the camp with Gorton at his usual fish-delivering hour because he failed to appear.

"Thinks we don't want him," decided Cassie.

"He's guessed correctly," agreed Jack. "If I eat another fish I'll have gills and sprout fins. I'd be aquatic."

After supper Jack returned to his heart-absorbing canvas and Cassie amused herself by collecting unobserved tin cans, which she threw down the cellar-way by uptilting the door. Between those which lurked in tall grasses and some she had emptied from their store of canned goods, the pile grew to astonishing proportions. The resulting neatness of lawn abundantly repaid her for the trouble. Well pleased but tired, she went early to bed and slept like a babe. That is, she slept until rattling tins beneath her window brought her to her feet.

"Those dogs again," she thought.

It recalled the fact that she had forgotten to close the uptilted door. The rascals had discovered the opening, and were either burying fresh fish heads or looking for spoils previously interred. She was indignant and determined to teach them a lesson. Hastily dressing, she tiptoed down the old stairs, in order not to wake Jack, and gained the back yard. With infinite caution she crept to the open cellar-way and lowered the plank door. Then she snapped into place the rusty hasp. Cassie had trapped the prowlers!

Immediately an arm encircled her, a hand covered her mouth and prevented her shriek.

"Are you quite mad?" inquired a low voice, the voice of Tom Gorton. Another question followed before she could recover breath. "Do you know what's in that cellar?" he demanded.

"Dogs," murmured Cassie, as soon as she found her mouth free. "Dogs burying bones."

"Dogs digging bones," corrected Gorton; but before he could explain his presence and the situation, there came a bumping noise at the hasped door, followed by such an uproar of shouts and shots that Jack, half-dressed, came flying to the spot.

"What's loose?" he yelled. "My word, what a racket!"

No one answered. Gorton, at the door, was shouting down at imprisoned men to surrender. Cassie, at a safe distance, listened agape. By his terms she knew him to be an officer, and that the trapped men were criminals he had been watching for days. Her farmer! She saw him produce a flashlight and try to locate his quarry thru crevices in the old door. It reminded her of the blinking light by the woods, and she understood. It was Gorton. Men had been in the cellar that night, too, but the sleuth missed them, thanks to the auto. Now she had them nailed and trapped ready to his hand. All he had to do was take them. But this seemed difficult, even with Jack to help.

Shots were perforating the cellar door. It looked as if her brother or Gorton might be killed. What could she do? What could she do? Fright inspired her. Into her agonized mind flashed a plan that was as essentially feminine as shooting stray dogs with a broom. A minute or so later the oaths and shouts and shots in the cellar gave place to violent sneezing. And no wonder! In the room above Cassie was sifting down red pepper thru holes and cracks in the defective floor. Of course it filled the cellar air, and the result demoralized the enemy. When she exhausted her munitions and returned to the scene of conflict, Tom Gorton had in custody two manacled prisoners.

"Peters!" she gasped, as the flashlight in Jack's hand illumined their faces. "Grandfather's chauffeur!"

"And his brother, known as Slippery Jake," added Gorton. "He's wanted for burglary. That's why I've been fishing—and watching."

"But I don't understand," cried Cassie. "What did they want in our cellar?"

Gorton didn't answer. He was busied at searching his prisoners for weapons, but Jack supplied the information.

"Diamonds," said he. "Peters had a hunch that granddad buried them down there in the sand. So he and Jake motored here occasionally to dig. It was their auto you heard snooping around the yard. But Gorton didn't go and come. He stayed. Has a camp in the woods——"

"How do you know?" broke in Cassie. "He told me," said Jack.

"When?" burst from his sister.

"Nights while we did some digging," explained her brother.

"Jack, you mustn't be disturbed! Gorton, the sleuth! Peters, the family chauffeur! Slippery Jake! All digging in the cellar for diamonds while she—supposed to be wakeful—slept!

"Well," scoffed Cassie, "what did you find?"

"This," said Jack, and held in the light a discolored key. "It unlocks grandfather's safety deposit box. He stored his jewels, but he came here and buried the key!"

"So," accused his sister, "your picture's a blind!"

"Nothing of the sort," denied Jack. "It's an eye-opener. After Tom delivers his prisoners he's coming back while I finish it."

"Coming back!" echoed Cassie.

"Of course," said Jack. "If he didn't who'd keep us in fish?"

Feminine Defense.

"You gotta hand it to Umson," said the fat plumber, "for pulling off new stunts."

"What's Umson been doing now?" the thin carpenter inquired.

"He was going to put a lady boxers show on the road."

"You say he was going to do it?"

"Yep. But he had to change his plans."

"Why?"

"One rehearsal proved the plan to be entirely impossible."

"Impossible?"

"Yep. It wouldn't work at all."

"But I can't understand why."

"I'll tell you. He got a bunch of girls to tackle the job, all right——"

"Uh, huh——"

"But every time they got warmed up in a boxing bout they insisted on tearing off the gloves and pulling hair."

Bursted Wires.

Soon after the installment of the telegraph in Fredericksburg, Va., a little darky, the son of my father's mammy, saw a piece of newspaper that had blown up on the telegraph wires and caught there. Running to my grandmother in a great state of excitement, he cried, "Miss Liza, come quick! Dem wires done bust and done let all the news out!"

In Writing.

"There was never but one guest at this here hotel that 'swung me while I was on the job," the landlord confided. "Several have beat me, but not while I was awake. But this here feller certainly has got one on me. Say, he's livin' here yet an' he ain't never paid me a cent. Why don't I collect his bill? How can I? Wait till I tell you.

"He'd been stoppin' here for near two months when I approached him on the subject of gettin' something on account. He was cheerful. I was polite. Finally I got mad and put it up to him straight.

"'Young man,' says I, 'you can't leave this hotel till you pay your bill.'

"'Will you put that in writin'?' says he. 'And before I knowed what I was doin' I done it.'"

Warned.

"Henry," said Mrs. Naggles, impressively, "I've decided to take up lecturing."

"Nonsense!" said her husband.

"I mean it, Henry. I have talents that require a wider scope than that afforded by the domestic circle. My mind is quite made up."

"Well, my dear, if you will, you will," he said resignedly. "But I'll tell you one thing. You'll never get the public to sit up till 1 and 2 o'clock to listen to you the way I do."

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You Can Tell The People Who Have Iron in Their Blood — Strong, Healthy, Vigorous Folks

Doctor Says Ordinary Nuxated Iron Will Make Nervous Rundown People 100% Stronger in Two Weeks' Time in Many Cases.

NEW YORK, N. Y.—"One glance is enough to tell which people have iron in their blood," said Dr. E. Sauer, a Boston physician who has studied widely both in this country and in Great European medical institutions, in a recent discourse. They are the ones that do and dare. The others are in the weakling class. Sleepless nights spent worrying over supposed ailments, constant dosing with habit forming drugs and narcotics for nervous weakness, stomach, liver or kidney disease and useless attempts to brace up with strong coffee or other stimulants are what keep them suffering and vainly longing to be strong. Their real trouble is lack of iron in the blood. Without iron the blood has no power to change food into living tissue and therefore, nothing you eat does you any good; you don't get the strength out of it. The moment iron is supplied the multitude of dangerous symptoms disappear. I have seen dozens of nervous, rundown people who were ailing all the time, double and even triple their strength and endurance and entirely get rid of every sign of dyspepsia, liver and other trouble in from ten to fourteen days' time simply by taking iron in the proper form. And this, after they had in some cases been doctoring for months without any benefit.

If you are not strong or well you owe it to yourself to make the following test: See how long you can work or how far you can walk without becoming tired. Next take two five-grain tablets of ordinary nuxated iron three times per day after meals for two weeks. Then test your strength again and see for yourself how much you have gained. There is nothing like good old iron to put color in your cheeks and sound, healthy flesh on your bones. But you must take iron in a form that can be easily absorbed and assimilated like nuxated iron if you want it to do you any good, otherwise it may prove worse than useless.

NOTE—Nuxated Iron recommended above by Dr. E. Sauer, is one of the newer organic iron compounds. Unlike the older inorganic iron products, it is easily assimilated, does not injure the teeth, make them black, nor upset the stomach; on the contrary, it is a most potent remedy, in nearly all forms of indigestion as well as for nervous, run-down conditions. The Manufacturers have such great confidence in Nuxated Iron that they offer to forfeit $100.00 to any charitable institution if they cannot take any man or woman under 60 who lacks iron and increase their strength 100 per cent or over in four weeks' time provided they have no serious organic trouble. They also offer to refund your money if it does not at least double your strength and endurance in ten days' time. It is dispensed by all good druggists.

The Ginger Jar

The Trained Ferret

By Edwin J. Webster

[Copyright by Frederick A. Stokes Co.]

UNCLE BILLY ATKINSON, who used to live near my farm out in Indiana, had the nucleus of a great industry in his rat-ferret, cable-laying combination," said Squire Wilkins reminiscently. "But the spitefulness of Pete Johnson put an end to what promised to be a flourishing business.

"One afternoon Uncle Billy strolled down to the village, and, as he always took a heartfelt delight in seeing other people work, he put in most of the afternoon watching a gang of men lay a cable thru a telephone conduit. They could lay the cable thru only one length of pipe at a time, and this was pretty slow work. By and by Uncle Billy had an idea.

"'It would be a good idea if you could put the cable thru a whole row of pipes at once, wouldn't it?' he inquired.

"'It certainly would,' answered the foreman, sarcastic-like. 'But that's a four-inch pipe, and the smallest man in my gang is eight inches thick. It's against the rules of the company to send an eight-inch man thru a four-inch pipe. It would be likely to strain the pipe.'

"Uncle Billy didn't say much, but it was evident he was doing some steady thinking. That afternoon I dropped over to his barn. The rats had been annoying him considerably, and Uncle Billy was hunting them with the aid of a ferret. At one end of the barn was a hole about four inches in diameter, and as fast as the rats were driven from the corn they would pike down the hole. After Uncle Billy had cleaned out the barn pretty well he sent the ferret down the hole. The rats had considered it safe to say for the next few minutes, but their remarks didn't sound in the nature of a joyous welcome to the ferret. Pretty soon the ferret climbed out, a little bruised, but licking his lips, and with the self-satisfied air of a ferret who has done his work and done it well. Uncle Billy looked at the ferret admiringly.

"'There isn't another ferret in the State of Indiana that has the intelligence of this animal of mine,' said Uncle Billy, complacently. 'When your Uncle Billy brings a few rats, that ferret, and his own massive intellect into play, he's going to revolutionize the telephone-cable-laying industry.'

"The next day Uncle Billy caught a few big rats alive in a trap. After a little difficulty he managed to tie a long piece of cord about the body of each rat. Then he began training the ferret. He would let a rat loose on the floor of the barn. The ferret, after the manner of his race, would start right in giving the rat lessons on the beauty of a strenuous life. But Uncle Billy, with the aid of a fishing pole, would keep the ferret off until the rat got started down the hole. This method didn't please the ferret, who had always supposed it was his duty to kill rats as quickly as possible, wherever he found them. But the ferret was an animal of unusual abilities, and it wasn't long before Uncle Billy had impressed the idea on him that his play was to drive any rats he might see down the nearest hole. Then Uncle Billy judged the ferret's education was complete.

"One afternoon Uncle Billy, accompanied by his trained ferret, and bearing on his arm a covered basket containing a number of rats with strings tied about their bodies, strolled down to where they were laying the telephone conduits. It was pretty slow work, and Uncle Billy looked on scornful-like.

"'Those eight-inch men of yours are doing the best they can,' he finally said to the foreman. 'But with the aid of a little invention of my own and this intelligent ferret, I can lay cables thru a block of pipes at once.'

"The foreman allowed that as a merry jester Uncle Billy was a success, but that he wouldn't be able to cash in heavily at the cable-laying game.

"'Go back to the farm, Uncle Billy,' said the foreman, 'raise butter and eggs, and listen to the merry song of the crows; but don't come down here interfering with the mysteries of electrical science.'

"But, finally, as Uncle Billy was sure he could make good, the foreman agreed to give him a chance to try his invention. Uncle Billy took the end of one of the strings that was tied to a rat and fastened it to a stout rope. Then he tied the rope to a telephone-cable. He placed the trained ferret on the ground and released the rat. The ferret, instead of springing right on the rat, chased him about a bit, until the rat dodged into the end of the conduit. Then, as the rat came thru the other end, one of the workmen seized the string, pulled it thru, and then pulled thru the rope and the length of cable. The whole thing was done in about a third of the time it ordinarily took to lay a length. Uncle Billy was tickled all the way thru at the success of his plan.

"'It's all right to talk about your electro-scientific mysteries,' he said, triumphant-like, 'but, when it comes to actual results, an inventive genius with the help of a trained ferret can copper science every deal.'

"The foreman looked as if he didn't quite want to admit all that, but he couldn't deny that Uncle Billy's plan had worked.

"'The beauty of your Uncle Billy's cable-laying scheme,' said Uncle Billy jubilantly, 'is that it will work as easily thru ten lengths of pipe as thru one.'

"They made more tests, but it worked every time. The foreman finally asked Uncle Billy to try and put a new cable thru in the main street, where there had been a break in the old one. But Uncle Billy hesitated a little.

"'The telephone company will be asked

"It bit Uncle Billy."

the expense of tearing up the street,' he said doubtfully. 'But I don't see where I am getting anything out of the deal except the reward of an approving conscience and healthy exercise for the ferret. Both are good in their way, but hardly substantial enough.'

"In the end Uncle Billy made a contract with the telephone company that brought him in more in a day than he could earn in a month on his farm. Things were pretty prosperous in Indiana about that time, almost every town wanted an extension of its telephone-lines, and as the fame of his system for laying cables spread, Uncle Billy's bank-roll grew to plethoric dimensions. Some of the other boys tried to work the same game; but they didn't have Uncle Billy's knack for training ferrets, and the rats were either killed before they entered the conduits, or when they were only about halfway thru Uncle Billy was pretty indignant at these attempts to cut into his business.

"'By rights I ought to be able to get out a patent on my idea,' he used to say. 'Of course, I'm not really the inventor of ferrets, but it was my modest genius that first saw the possibilities of utilizing their dislike for rats.'

"If it hadn't been for the meanness and treachery of Pete Johnson, Uncle Billy today might be one of the richest men in the State. Pete and Uncle Billy formerly had been partners, but a little disagreement had severed their friendship, and Pete for months had been looking for a chance to get even. One day, when the faithful ferret was helping lay cables under the direction of Uncle Billy, Pete happened on the scene.

"'I thought all your laborers belonged to the union,' he said to the foreman.

"The foreman allowed they did.

"'They do?' sneered Pete. 'Well, I'd like to know to what union that ferret belongs. That's a scab ferret, a ferret that's taking the food and clothing out of the mouths of faithful union ferrets. It's my belief that is an imported, pauper-labor ferret.'

"Uncle Billy was mighty indignant at hearing his little worker so abused.

"'That's an American ferret, trained and educated by an honest American farmer. As to his being a nonunion ferret, he's president, secretary and sole charter-member of Ferret's Union No. 1. He's the pioneer and ancestor of a race of cable-laying ferrets.'

"Pete, finding that he wasn't able to stir up any hard feeling against the ferret on the labor question, went away, growling and grumbling to himself. But it pained him to see all the good coin Uncle Billy was accumulating, and he kept puzzling his brain for some means of blocking the game. A few days later Uncle Billy took a contract to lay the cables thru a conduit in a nearby town. He had grown so proud of his success that he boasted pretty freely, and Pete heard of the contract and went over to the town the day before Uncle Billy was to begin work. I warned Uncle Billy that Pete was up to some mischief.

"'Pete isn't making that trip just to arrange things comfortably for you,' I told him. 'You had better make some inspection of the conduits before you send your trusted ferret into them.'

"But, no, it was the ferret's business to look out for the conduit end of the work, and Uncle Billy wasn't going to disturb his head about it. The next day, when everything was ready for work, he released a rat, and the ferret chased it into the first conduit. In about a minute it came the rat, then came a skunk, and last of all, the ferret. But he looked pretty disgusted with his job.

"'The ferret has done what he considers a good day's work under the circumstances,' I said to Uncle Billy. 'You had better let him have the rest of the day off.'

"Uncle Billy didn't see it that way and insisted on sending the ferret into another conduit. Pete had evidently done a thoro job, for the ferret looked even more weary when he came out of the second conduit than when he had left the first. The odor he gave out showed that he had good reasons for his disgust. When Uncle Billy tried to send him into a third conduit, even the faithful, hard-working ferret decided he had had enough of it. Then Uncle Billy lost his temper, and seizing a stick began beating the ferret.

"'Do you think I brought you to this town just to have you give an exhibition of a ferret in a tantrum?' said Uncle Billy, angrily. 'No ferret that is afraid of a few skunks will ever make his mark in the great world of ferrets.'

"The ferret didn't look at it in this light, and as Uncle Billy kept on beating him, he finally turned with a little snarl, bit Uncle Billy on the hand, and then scampered away at the top of his speed. Uncle Billy was almost heartbroken at the loss of his valued assistant, and seemed to think the ferret had been mighty ungrateful.

"'I've educated and cherished that ferret like a son,' said Uncle Billy, sorrowfully, 'and now, on account of a few playful taps with a stick, he abandons me in the middle of a contract. Ingratitude, thy name is ferret.'

"'Your pet wasn't entirely to blame,' I told Uncle Billy, severely. 'Even the most faithful of ferrets would draw the line on going against that odoriferous conduit-game three times in the same day.'"

Next week's offering in this humorous series is the story of "The Prodigal Bee." Read it.

Down on the Farm.

BY EARL H. EMMONS.

The Gooseberry.

The gooseberry, which is now found in more or less abundance all over the world, is one of the regular backyard residents of the farm, and is planted usually around the watermelon patch, as it serves better than barbed wire in discouraging curious people who like to monkey with the melon crop.

It is said the gooseberry first came to notice in Germany during the time of the Thirty Years' War, when the German Catholics, with their allies, were trying to deal out gospel to the rest of the world by means of chopfalls and grapeshot. Shortly after being discovered in the Vaterland, the gooseberry was introduced into England, and while there is no authority for the statement it is likely that when the Germans ran out of grapeshot they used gooseberry-shot as a substitute, and thus was the gooseberry introduced into J. Bull's territory along with other things the Germans were handing out at the time.

Naturally England took up the idea, after being shown, and is now said to produce more gooseberries than any other country, but it is not known whether England is proud or ashamed of the fact.

The plant of the gooseberry is not notably attractive, nor is the blossom a particular work of art or fragrance, and as the gooseberry itself is nothing to go into raptures about, there is not much to recommend it, and no very good reason for its being has yet been discovered except that it furnishes food for a certain variety of worms who evidently are not particular about their diet.

Taken as a whole, the gooseberry is

(Continued on Page 31.)

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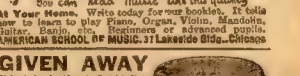

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THE SIX CORNERS BOY

Or, Strike for Freedom

By Milford Merrill

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CHAPTER X.

QUITTING THE OPENINGS

JET was the one most in the thoughts of Perry Allard after he had accepted his wages and made up his mind fully to change his home and occupation. The girl was so kindly disposed, so full of fun and sympathy that the boy could not leave her uncle's employ without a certain feeling of regret at parting from the backwoods girl, who had treated him with all the friendliness of a sister. Jet had been a good friend in all his trouble. He could not forget how she had saved him from the clutches of his malignant uncle-in-law, and it wasn't pleasant to think of parting from her forever.

He stood with her down at the little spring the next morning, just after breakfast. He was to bring for her the last pail of water, to say good-by while Fatty Sayles was getting out the horse and buckboard.

"I am glad for you, Perry," the girl said, trying desperately to smile, "because I know you can do better than to stay here on the openings, tied down to the shingle business. Oh, it must be awful nice to be a city boy, to have the sights and sounds of the city all the time for company! You won't get to chase any more squirrels, to help my dog dig another woodchuck, nor run races with me to the big swamp oak and back. I know you'll soon forget us all, and—and——"

"No I shan't any such thing," broke forth the boy. "I have had a good time here all right, and I'm going to keep you folks in mind always. Sometime you may be able to come to the city to live, when you and I will meet again. Won't that be fine?"

He took her small brown hand and pressed it warmly.

"You've been a good sister to the orphan boy, Jet, and I shall never forget. When I come into my own, as I shall some time, I'll hunt you up and renew old friendships, bet your life on that!"

"I hope you will, Perry."

The boy snatched up the pail, brimming with water, and went swiftly toward the house. Five minutes later he met Mr. Norstuff as he was going to the waiting buckboard, a small grip in his hand.

"I hope, if you should hereafter hear any evil report regarding me you'll not feel too harshly," said the man, as he shook Perry's hand.

"You have treated me well, sir," returned the lad. "I shall not forget."

When they were out of sight of the house, Perry turned to his seatmate saying, "It'll seem strange and lonesome for a spell, Duke."

"I should say so. I'm sorry you had to go, Perry."

"You don't doubt its being for the best, Duke?"

"Not if you go see Paul Barding, as I suggested. I want you to do up this old curmudgeon who has beat you out of your home. I know he has no right there, and it'll delight me to see you get your rights. For this reason I am glad you decided to quit the openings."

"I shall have to find another job," said Perry. "I can't stay idle very long, as you know."

"I'll help you find a berth with one of the mills, or else on a boat."

It was nearly noon when the voyagers reached the city of Ironwood. They put up at a small hotel, got their midday meal, after which they went upon the street to look about.

"Hello!" exclaimed Duke. "Look what's here?"

The fat boy had halted before a stairway leading to a basement, in the entrance to which swung a small sign reading, "Athletics. Wrestling and boxing taught by one who is scienced."

Perry's eyes were at once glued to the sign. His heart thrilled at the thought of taking lessons from a scientific wrestler and boxer. All the old hurt of the farm days came back to him. He remembered the snubs and jeers of stout Jim Stedger, his cuffs and rude rebuffs, all of which still rankled in the breast of our boy hero.

"Here's your chance, Perry!" exclaimed Duke, with a broad grin.

"And you may be sure I shall improve it," returned Perry. "First, of course, I must find something to do, some sort of work that'll give me board and clothes, after which you'll find me here taking lessons, Duke Sayles."

The boys searched the city over, seeking a job for Perry Allard, all to no purpose. There seemed not a single opening save one, and that was on a small schooner that sailed the lakes. Perry would much rather work either in a mill or factory, he told Duke.

"Well, we'll have to wait a while I reckon," from Duke Sayles. "How much money you got, my friend?"

Perry named the amount, sufficient for board for a fortnight. Instantly the hand of the openings youth went into his pocket, coming forth with a fat pocketbook.

"Can't let you suffer, Perry, my boy. Here, take this till you find a job. When you get to earning plenty of money you can pay me back."

"No, Duke. Keep your money."

"I should say not," and the fat youth thrust the wallet into our hero's hand. "Don't you attempt to hand that back, Perry Allard. If you do I'll give you a good thrashing."

"But, Duke," protested Perry, "I have all the money——"

No, you haven't. Keep that till you get a job. I ain't needing it now; may never need it, for that matter. When I do I'll let you know," and Sayles hurried away without permitting his

"Holy Antoine!"

young friend a chance to debate the question further.

"Well, of all the chaps, that Duke Sayles beats 'em all!" exclaimed Perry.

Returning to the hotel, the boy engaged board for a week. He went up to his room, about the middle of the afternoon, sat down in a chair and drew out the wallet generous Duke Sayles had forced upon him. Opening the pocketbook, Perry drew out a long package of bank notes. He counted them slowly, dazedly, quite astounded.

"Two hundred dollars!" he exclaimed. It was true; the wallet contained this sum of money, the most Perry had ever seen at one time in his life. To him it was riches.

It was surprising to find a youth like Sayles carrying so much money. Wages were low, and it seemed hardly probable that the openings youth had saved all this from his paltry earnings.

Suddenly the truth dawned in the brain of our hero. Sayles was in the secrets of the Norstuff family. He recalled that underground chamber, those sides of beef and whole hogs slung up ready for the market. Then, to make the case plainer, there was the visit of the county sheriff in search of a gang of cattle stealers.

It seemed reasonable to suppose that Sayles had knowledge of all that had taken place at the house on the openings; that he had shared in the profits of the illegal operations. The thought shocked Perry into an ejaculation of disgust. The money burned his fingers. He hastily returned it to the wallet, resolving never to use a dollar of it for himself.

"It is too bad that a fellow so fine as Duke Sayles should be connected with cattle stealers," mused the boy.

That evening he went about town again, and ostensibly called at the office of Lawyer Barding, from which a faint light shone upon the street. A tall young man greeted him as he entered.

"Good evening, young man. What can I do for you?"

Perry sat down on the chair pointed out by the lawyer. He hardly knew why he was here. The request of Sayles was the only excuse he had for calling.

"I thought I'd come in and see you in case I should some time need a lawyer," said Perry. Then he mentioned the name of the fat boy at Norstuff's, and that he had recommended him to his favor

"Oh, yes, Fatty Sayles," laughed the lad had told his story. "I have heard all about the Allards. Your father was a friend of my own dear father; in fact, the two were school chums away back in the early days down in the good old State of Maine. Why, they cut up many shines together among the Blue Noses across the border. It does my eyes good to shake the hand of a son of John A. Allard!"

The grasp of Paul Barding's hand was an inspiration to our orphan lad. He felt that in this rising young city lawyer he had found a good and true friend.

"And now," concluded the lawyer, as he rose to his feet, "we will adjourn for tonight; but come round tomorrow—no, we'll say the day after, and I'll talk this matter over more fully with you, Perry Allard."

Our hero returned that night to his hotel feeling elated and hopeful for the future. He was heartily overjoyed to find in Lawyer Barding an old friend of his father's. It was like running upon an old acquaintance in a strange land.

Early the next morning, when Perry came down to breakfast, he entered the hotel dining-room just behind a youth whose face, tho turned from him, the boy believed he should recognize at sight.

He was not wrong. The other went to a side table, sat down and looked over the bill of fare with seeming indifference, rather with a bored air. It was the fellow's method of showing his familiarity with city ways. This air of boredom sat rather queerly on the countenance of the person in question—Jim Stedger of Six Corners!

It was he and no other. Perry sat down, without looking again toward the table where his so-called cousin was eating. "I'll not notice him in the least," thought Perry, who meant to ignore the ugly son of his uncle-in-law if possible.

Jim went out ahead of Perry. The latter was anxious to avoid meeting the young bully, and was hurrying toward the street when he ran into the object of his thoughts, who was also setting his face toward the outer air.

CHAPTER XI.

ESCAPING A BULLY.

"CONNIPTION fits!" roared Jim.

"I beg your pardon," began Perry, to be interrupted with a quick, sharp guffaw from the youth with whom he had collided.

"Perry Allard, by all the powers!" exclaimed Jim Stedger, grasping the slender hand of the runaway. "I am glad to see you again, old chap. Why, d'ye know mother's about cried her eyes out over you?"

"I am sorry to say I don't believe you, Jim," was the answer evoked from the runaway lad, who had no predilections in favor of his supposed relative. "No doubt you'll tell me Dad Stedger likewise weeps over his loss!"

"Now Perry, I'd be ashamed!" rebuked the larger boy.

"Ashamed of what?"

"Of making sport of your Aunt Lucretia, who loves you most to death. I'm telling the honest truth when I say she's cried her eyes half out over your desertion. She and dad have had no end of fights over you."

"How about old Pete?"

"Oh, that was all a mistake. Dad found the hoss after a while. All that sticks in his crop now is the ten dollars he had to pay the man for his keep. You turned a neat trick, Perry, and I glory in your spunk. Why, I couldn't believe first going off that you had it in you to do it, you know."

Perry, anxious to shake Jim, turned and walked up the street. The other kept along at his side, much to the younger lad's annoyance.

"Where ye going, Perry?"

"For a short walk is all."

"All right. I'll go 'long with you."

The two boys pursued their way toward the upper end of town to where the wagon road from the upriver country entered the burg. Perry had no particular objective point; he was mainly anxious to shake Jim.

"As I said, you turned a neat trick, Perry," resumed the country boy. "How have you got along since you ran away?"

"Oh, all right."

"Been here all the time?"

"Oh, no. I was up on the openings for a while."

"Got a job here now?"

"Not yet. I expect one soon, tho."

"Well, as you haven't landed one yet, why not go back with me, Perry?"

"What, back to Six Corners, Jim?" The speaker halted, facing his companion with a look of disgust.

"Why, yes, why not? Dad's sorry he didn't use you right. He's goin' to need a lot of help this fall and if you come

back he'll use you white. I tell you this in the strictest confidence, Perry."

"Maybe you do, but I don't bite worth a cent," laughed our hero.

"What do you mean?"

Jim's face darkened with anger. It was not the purpose of Perry to get into any argument, for the boy was stronger than when he left the farm, he was still far from being in the good muscular trim that would enable him to meet all comers.

"You needn't get mad, Jim," soothed Perry. "I'm not going back to Six Corners right away, that's a cinch, so there's no use of your urging."

"Oh, I won't urge," growled the other. "Seeing's I am down with a light wagon, and there's plenty of room for a passenger, and your aunt is most crazy over your desertion of her, I thought it no more than fair to give you a chance to do right by the dear old lady. Now, if you won't go back that's your lookout. I'll simply tell mother what you said and let it go at that."

"Why tell her that you saw me at all?" said Perry.

"You wouldn't advise me to lie to her, would you? I reckon you ain't the goody, goody sort of chap you once was, Perry Allard. I'm almost ashamed to be seen in your company."

"Pity about you, Jim!" laughed Perry.

"Now what do you mean by that?"

The two boys, in their walk, had wandered beyond the confines of the town, and were now well out in the oak grubs that lined the bank of the river mouth where it entered the little lake on which Ironwood was built. It was a lonely spot, not conducive to a satisfied feeling on the part of one of the boys, at least, who had good reason to distrust the other.

Jim turned on his companion with flaming face and clinched hands. He gazed about assuring himself that they were alone.

"Never mind acting up, Jim," quickly uttered our hero. "I think we had better go back at once. I did not intend to come so far——"

"Well, you've come far enough to give me the chance I want," sneered the elder boy. "Since you refuse to go home with me, I'll make it interesting for Aunt Lucretia's kid, right here and now!"

Perry sprang backward as Jim aimed a blow at his face.

"Stop it, stop it, Jim!" shouted Perry. "I have no quarrel——"

"Take that, you baby-faced hypocrite!"

Perry dodged a second wallop, and darted at the legs of his enemy. There was a dull thud as the arms of the small boy were wrapped about Jim's knees. A quick jerk doubled the stalwart Six Corners youth backward to the ground. Our hero, having got the advantage, pursued it with all the remaining strength of his young body. He twisted himself away from the fingers of burly Jim, clutched his throat and compressed his windpipe with both hands till the big boy's tongue protruded. When the other began to sweat in the face, Perry eased up on his hold.

"Now have you had enough?" gasped trembling Perry.

A hoarse wheeze alone answered. Big Jim lay as limp as a rag, scarcely breathing. Once Perry felt frightened, fearing lest the bully had lost his breath altogether.

The fellow came to after a time, however, and scrambled to his feet, quite the worse for his unexpected tumble.

"Now behave yourself, Jim Stedger," admonished our Perry, having armed himself with a stout oak club, standing off, ready to defend himself to the last.

"I'll fix you!" breathed the bully, hotly.

"I tell you I don't want to fight," protested Perry.

"And I tell you I am going to just about kill you for this! Nice thing for you to go about crowing over how you licked Jim Stedger!" growled the Six Corners bully. "When you go back to the hotel you'll be a handsome object for the photographer, mind what I tell you!"

The threats made by Jim alarmed Perry. Altho he had once overcome the fellow, he yet knew that it was purely an accident, and that once in the clutches of Jim he would be as a child in his hands. Perry had often bewailed his delicate constitution and girlike appearance. It nettled him to be called a "sissy" by his mates at school. Worst of all was his physical inability to defend himself from the big boys when attacked. His month's sojourn in the woods had hardened his muscles in a measure. Strength would develop, only give him time, but now he did not care to try titles with his enemy when he knew his own physical weakness.

"Stand off, I tell you!" he cried, waving his cudgel.

"Drop that stick, you wharf rat!" roared big Jim.

"I won't do it!" retorted Perry. "Stand off, I tell you, or you'll get this club over your head!"

The speaker was desperate. His teeth were closed shut, his eyes shining. Jim hesitated, glancing about sharply. Looking for a club, of course, Perry realized.

"Let's call it off for now, Jim," urged Perry.

"Will you go back to Six Corners with me if I let you off from the good licking you deserve?"

"No, Jim, I can't do that."

"Then you get yours now."

Perry could see the searching eyes of his enemy, and knew that when he got hold of a club his own life would be in danger. Without waiting for such an outcome the small boy turned and ran.

"Whoopee!" yelled Jim Stedger, who broke in pursuit.

Perry shaped his course toward the river, where he hoped to run upon some log rafters who frequented the mouth of the stream. He was fleet of foot. It required all big Jim's agility to keep in sight of his intended victim.

"I'll get you now, you coward!" roared Jim.

But he did not get him then. Perry was light in weight, fleet of foot, and urged on as he was today by extreme fear, he ran like a frightened deer. With all his running he refused to drop his cudgel. If overtaken he meant to make good use of this in his own defense.

Down to the very water's edge dashed the scared boy. He glanced eagerly up and down the stream, but saw only a blank expanse of water, broken here and there with drift-piles of pine sawlogs intended for the Ironwood mills.

Straight down the bank of the almost currentless river ran the boy, closely pursued by Jim Stedger. Perry seemed to be holding his own, when he turned a short corner, passing around several leaning trees, to run upon a canoe with a single occupant, resting idly upon the water. With a flying leap our boy hero entered the canoe, his momentum sending the light craft shooting out from land like a bird upon the wing.

When pursuing Jim Stedger came whirling around the bend, he nearly plunged head first into the river at the spot lately occupied by the Indian dugout.

"Holy Antoine!" exclaimed the farmer's son, as he tottered on the brink of the water, seeing a few yards distant the boy of his pursuit crouching in the bottom of a pine dugout, almost at the feet of a young girl.

An amazed, indignant cry fell from the lips of the girl, who dropped the fishpole she had been holding, and threw up both hands.

"Mercy!" she finally screamed. "What is it all about?"

"Paddle ashore, miss," called the big boy on shore, waving his hand toward the people on the water. "I want that chap! He is a thief!"

"Never mind him," spoke Perry, in a rapid undertone. "I won't hurt you. Let me take that paddle." At the same time he laid his cudgel in the bottom of the canoe.

The girl was plainly mystified. Perry reached for the paddle, grasping it by the small end. He drew it toward him with a quick movement.

"Aren't you coming ashore?" called Jim.

"Never mind him," again warned Perry. "I am not a thief. He is anxious to fight me, and I ain't that kind of a boy. I'll paddle across to the other side if you don't mind."

"And I go home without a fish? That'll be awful. Paul and mamma will feel bad if I do. They're hungry——"

"You can come later, and I'll help you catch some."

With that Perry began paddling toward the opposite shore.

CHAPTER XII.

A NEW EXPERIENCE.

BIG Jim Stedger ran along the bank of the stream shouting after the occupants of the canoe, but of course our hero paid no attention to the bully's outcries. The girl was naturally mystified, but she held her peace until they were beyond danger.

In vain the youth shook his fist after the retreating canoe, it would not turn back at his bidding.

"Who is he?" asked the girl when the safety of the stranger lad seemed secured.

"Jim Stedger of Six Corners," informed Perry, resting his paddle for an instant across the canoe.

"As if I knew such a person."

"Don't you, miss?"

"Never heard the name before."

"Just as well you don't know him. He's an ornery creature, not nice to anybody, even to girls."

The boat grounded upon the sand near the mouth of a small creek.

"There!" exclaimed Perry. "I reckon that settles Jim for now."

"But how about me?" asked the girl.

"Oh, you shan't lose anything," declared Perry, looking into the face of the fair fisherwoman.

She was dainty and neat to look at, somewhere about fourteen, the boy thought, with reddish hair, now loosely coiled at the back of a white neck. Her eyes, deeply, darkly blue, sparkled with merriment, and across the slightly tanned face there rioted a lot of freckles.

Her arms were slender yet apparently strong, while her brown hands were very slim. Perry liked her appearance. She was studying him at the same time. At

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length she burst into a laugh, saying:

"Of all boys I ever met, you are the cheekiest!"

"Why do you say that?" Perry assumed a hurt expression.

"It takes a lot of brass to steal a girl as you have stolen me," she answered grimly, tossing her dragging line out into the stream. "There's no fish around here, and Paul and mamma have lost their dinner, all thru your actions. Aren't you ashamed?"

"Perhaps a little," admitted the boy. "But desperate diseases require desperate remedies you know. It was to either escape in your boat, or take a licking from the bully of Six Corners; I chose the former alternative. I ask your forgiveness—will you grant it?"

"For this once I will; but why did this Jim wish to thrash you, a much smaller boy than himself."

"That's the exact reason."

"How do you mean?"

"My being so much smaller, he could easier give me a licking. Jim isn't hunting tough propositions, by any means. I have promised myself to take it out of him at some future day, after I become an expert wrestler and boxer. Ah! that'll be the time of my life, miss; but, goodness, I don't even know your name!"

"Nor do I know yours."

"Oh, well, that's easy; I am simply Perry Allard of Six Corners. I ran away from a tyrannical uncle-in-law who's the father of this big Jim you saw chasing me. I have struck out for myself in this world, and ask no odds of any of my relatives."

"Your parents——"

"Both dead."

"Oh, I am so sorry!" and she held out a slim brown hand. He accepted it with a grin of pleasure.

"Now it's your turn," said our hero.

"I don't think you'll care to hear about me," and a tinge of red shot into the tanned cheeks. "My father was once a lake captain. He was lost in a storm several years ago. Mamma, Jame Paul and I live in one of the shacks once belonging to the John A. Allard estate. You see, that man owned a lot of property here, way back before I was born. He lost it somehow, and went away up the river and got into the farming and shingle business. He's dead now, and the property here has gone to the dogs—not worth paying taxes on, so we have the old shack for nothing. Mamma does sewing and washings for the boom men, and I catch fish; that's how we live. Will you come to the house and see Paul and mamma?"

"Sure I will!" cried Perry, in wide-eyed interest.

"Then I will guide you and return later for the fish. We'll have a sorry dinner unless——"

"Did you say John A. Allard, Miss —"

"Oh, I forgot. My name is Denton, Sally Denton. Yes, it was John A. Allard who once owned all the land on the north side of the mouth of the river."

"And John A. Allard was my father!" said Perry, in a husky undertone.

"Your father!" and the girl stared her astonishment.

"Yes," said Perry. "I scarcely remember him, he died so long ago, but everybody tells me that he was a good man, and did a vast business which finally dwindled down to one big farm, which is now owned by my Aunt Lucretia. I am glad I met you today, Miss Denton. It seems odd that you, an utter stranger to me, should be living in one of my father's houses."

Boy and girl talked for some time ere Perry could make up his mind to visit her home. She led the way, fluttering with excitement over the revelations of the day. The house stood not far from the river bank, on a considerable elevation, surrounded on two sides by oak grubs. The house was small, old and dilapidated, yet the grounds had been well cared for, evidencing the touch of a master hand.

"It's Paul," said the girl, "who does the garden work. He can walk a little now, and the doctor says he might be entirely cured by an operation, but we are too poor just now for that."

A woman came and stood in the door as boy and girl approached.

"Oh, mamma, see who I've brought home with me!" cried Sally, in a burst of enthusiasm, turning to her companion. "Perry Allard, this is my mother, Mrs. Denton."

Perry stepped forward and shook hands with the woman, who, despite the evidence of hard toil on hands and frame, was yet a comely-looking woman of less than forty years.

"Allard is not a strange name to me," smiled the toil-worn matron. "Can it be by any possibility that you are a relative of the late John A. Allard of Ironwood?"

"He was my father, Mrs. Denton."

"Is it possible? Come inside and have a chair. Paul will be glad to see you. He was befriended by Mr. Allard, and it was while working for him that he got the hurt that lamed him for life. I hadn't the least idea that the gentleman named had a son living."

Perry entered the house and was introduced to a young, pale-looking young man of about twenty, who greeted the boy with a warm handclasp.

"My goodness! You don't tell me that you are John A. Allard's boy?" cried the young man, with a surprised look on his face.

When Perry assured him of his identity the youth seemed very much pleased, and greeted the boy with unusual warmth.

"I suppose you are down this way looking after this property," said Paul Denton, after a brief talk. "This land isn't considered very valuable, and I supposed it had passed out of the hands of the original owner."

"I never knew father had a claim on it till told so by your sister. No, it was a mere accident that sent me drifting over here. Miss Sally will tell you how it happened."

Explanations were entered into till all concerned were fully advised of how matters stood. Paul expressed great pleasure in meeting Perry, assuring him that it was a pleasure to meet the son of his old friend, John A. Allard.

"Well," finally declared Perry, "I am going down to the river to help Miss Sally catch a mess of fish for dinner. It was my rudeness that deprived her of a chance at the fish, so I owe it to you all to do what I can to make amends."

Paul had a lot of fishing tackle from which our hero made his selection, and went back with the girl for a fishing frolic. The day was proving most interesting. Jim Stedger had really favored Perry by chasing him into the arms of some unknown friends.

Perry and Sally were lucky enough to catch a nice mess of rock bass, which sort of fish abounded the length of the river.

"I've had a splendid time!" exclaimed Sally, as she walked back to the house with Perry at her side, he swinging a string of fine bass.

"Here, too," agreed the boy. "Only to think that I never knew that such persons lived as the Dentons till a few hours ago. My goodness! I seem to feel like I'd known you folks always."

Mrs. Denton soon had the fish frying for dinner, to which Perry remained, not needing much persuasion. He liked Paul. The young man seemed very friendly and of a gentle disposition, with a mind that was stored with wonderful knowledge.

"As a lad I knew your father quite well," declared Paul. "He was a wise and good man, yet he had enemies. His fate was a sad one, and many people almost believed he came to his death by foul means. But perhaps you would not wish me to talk of these things, Perry?"

The two youths had retired to the narrow porch, Paul resting in a big chair, his crippled foot bundled on a stool.

"Do talk about my father, Paul," urged the boy. "I hardly knew him. Did he lose his life in a storm on the lake?"

"Oh, no; he was burned up in a mill."

"I never knew that. How did it happen?"

"Your father owned one of the big mills here in Ironwood. He was often at the mill, looking about among the workmen. One night the mill burned and Mr. Allard perished with it."

"How terrible!"

"It was indeed."

"Do you know the particulars, Paul?"

"Why, yes, if you care to hear them."

"I certainly do," affirmed Perry, who altho very deeply shocked at learning of the manner of his father's death, was yet anxious to know all about it, and if possible fathom the cause if any for somebody's enmity.

"Very well," pronounced the gentle Paul. "There had been much discontent among the workmen over wages, and a strike was pending when the big mill took fire and burned to the ground.

"It seems your father had placed new machinery in the mill, had been to large expense, was in debt, in fact, and at the time unable to meet the demands of the millmen for a raise. Altho he promised to do this at the earliest practical moment, there was a man among them, the ringleader in all the trouble, who positively refused all compromise, and kept a lot of the least reasonable of the strikers with him.

"A meeting had been appointed at the mill office. I was a small lad at the time, but had a friend working for Allard, and I went one night to see Elbert Dover, my friend, and entered the mill just as the ringleader and another man made a vicious assault upon Mr. Allard.

"I saw the fight, and saw your father hurled down a shaft into the lower regions of the mill. I was nearly frightened to death at the sight. Men ran swearing from the place, Elbert Dover among them. He caught me up in his arms as he ran, telling me that I was in danger. A few minutes later the mill was a mass of flame——"

"And my father still in the mill, badly hurt?" gasped Perry.

"Yes, my boy——"

"Tell me who did it, Paul—hurled my father to his death?"

"The man really guilty of your parent's death was named Zadok Stedger, now living somewhere up the river on a farm!"

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Ears have they, but they hear not—cornstalks.

Arms have they, but they hug not—windmills.

Tongues have they, but they talk not—wagons.

Legs have they, but they walk not—tables.

Heads have they, but they think not—cabbages.

Noses have they, but they smell not—pitchers.

Lips have they, but they kiss not—tulips.

Teeth have they, but they chew not—saws.

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FAIRY CORNER

THE WISEST OF ALL.

The owl, they say, is the wisest bird,
The wisest I've ever heard,
But a very foolish thing is that
This wise old owl seems to me.
For he'll never nod his ruffled head
Or close an eye, for I've
Till baby stars are in bed and snug
Off to their soft beds go.
If a little boy I know could but
Be sure as ever you can,
He'd never grow and grow and grow
'Way up to be a man.
He'd best not be like wise old owl,
But like the wiser sun,
And hurry away to his cozy bed
As soon as day is done
—Margaret Erskine

BOBBY'S FIRE ELVES.

Bobby stood at the top of the wide old stairway and frowned as his nurse's voice drifted up to him.

"Master Bobby shall have a good supper, sir, an' afterwards I'll read to him, sir—yes, sir—I'll stay close by, sir—not at all tonight? Yes, sir. No, I won't, sir. Good-by, sir!"

Click went the telephone receiver on the hook, and Bobby knew that he was virtually sentenced to a lonely, supperless evening, since his father would not be home all night

Bobby blinked his blue eyes and clinched his small fists to keep the tears back, as he left the head of the stairway and went into his nursery. He was not a 'fraid cat, but it was very lonely in the great old house at night, and when the wind blew hard outside the boards creaked, and at such times small boys huddled in great four-poster beds are apt to remember all the robber tales they ever have heard.

His eyes were full of reproach when he lifted them, as his nurse flounced in. He saw that there were two round spots of color on her cheeks and that her eyes were bright with anticipation. In her hands she carried a plate and a glass of milk.

"Hurry, sir, an' eat this," she said. "I'll be goin' upstairs to put on me hat an' me coat, an' if you're not finished when I come down ready to go out you'll just have to sleep hungry."

Bobby made no answer. He took the plate of heavy doughnuts from her hand and when she had departed managed to swallow several gulps of the ice-cold milk. Then he undressed with feverish haste, because he wanted to be in bed before he was left alone. He had discovered that he felt less deserted under the covers.

After a time the door flung open, and in came nurse to remove the doughnuts. "That's a good boy," she said, as she caught sight of his forlorn little outline under the bedclothes. "Mind now, not a word to your father tomorrow night. I'll be bringin' you home some goodies."

Then she was gone and Bobby heard her footsteps growing fainter and fainter as she neared the end of the long corridor upon which the nursery opened.

Nurse was gone.

Bobby felt like crying, but he remembered in time that his father hated him to whine.

He lay and stared into the thick darkness until he fell into a fitful, broken sleep.

He woke with a start to discover that he was very hungry. How he wished that nurse had not taken the plate of soggy doughnuts away with her! Even the milk in the bottom of the glass would have been welcome, but that, too, was gone. Bobby folded his arms tight over the big hole in his tummy, but that didn't help much.

Forgetting to be afraid, he slipped out of his bed and walked into the hall. Silver moonlight fell like a mist from a high window, and the whiteness of it made Bobby realize that he was very cold.

He went back into the nursery and put on a few articles of clothing. Then he ventured forth again into the empty corridor. The boards creaked under him, but Bobby refused to run. His father had so often said that fright should make men slow and steady, not panicky.

When he reached the head of the stairs he felt as tho a wolf or some creature of the night must be peering at him out of the darkness that yawned below, but the gnawing of hunger drove him on down the stairs, thru the shadowy lower hall into the dining-room, where he switched on the light. No use, he knew, to look for food in the pantry, which would be locked. Instead, he climbed on to a chair and searched the top of the buffet.

All that it contained was a big mince pie, and into this Bobby cut with a knife and fork from the table, eating until there was a great feeling of dullness where the emptiness had been.

He was deliciously drowsy, and conscious only that the room was chilly as the last mouthful of pie disappeared. He knew, too, that there was a fire in the library, and that a great chair was before it. The trip upstairs was too much for his strained nerves. He would stay in the chair until nurse came in and carried him up to bed.

There was a good fire in the grate where nurse had been sitting before the 'phone bell rang, and the youngster curled up and gazed steadily into the flames, trying to picture burning castles and forests afire.

It did not surprise him very much when a little imp of a fire elf hopped out of the flames and poised on the fender. It spoke to him civilly enough, and he was not afraid of it.

"It's lonesome out here," said the fire elf.

"Yes," said Bobby, "it's very lonesome. It's awful when nurse goes out and leaves you all alone. It makes you want to scream. Are there people in the land of fire?"

"Lots of them—the jolliest playmates," said the little black imp.

"Playmates," said Bobby wistfully. "Playmates!" He said the word slowly, as tho he loved it. "I'd rather have a playmate than anything else in the world."

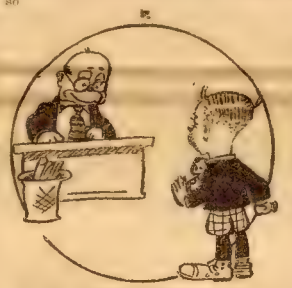
A crash of falling wood startled him. And the next moment he was looking full up into his father's face.

"It's the last time, old man," said Mr. Hubbard, patting Bobby's shoulder

"The last time for what?" asked Bobby, his face wreathed with smiles in pure relief that his daddy was home and that he was no longer alone in the big house.

"You've been talking aloud. Nightmare, most likely, and it's the last time that you'll be lonesome for me or for a playmate."

Then he took Bobby on his knee and made some plans. And in them there was no room for a neglectful nurse or for prowling by one's 7-year-old self thru cold corridors. But there were certain details about going to live with Aunt Rose and her houseful of joyous healthy youngsters that strongly appealed to Bobby. And he told his daddy so



Employer—"Do you save any of your salary, Jimmie?"
Office Boy—"Yes, sir, but I never lend money to nobody."

A BOY'S WAR DUTY.

"But you know what Uncle Sam said last week," said Janet. "I thought you agreed with him then."

"Yes, I did," replied Oscar, "but he was looking way ahead. He said there would be wonderful chances after the war, and that the world would need trained men. That may all be true, but what about now? There are plenty to prepare for the time after the war, but there are lots of things I could do right now. I'm no slacker."

"No, you're not," said Uncle Sam, who had just come in, "and you're not a quitter either. Moreover, you are old enough to feel some responsibility toward your country, and I'm glad you do. Suppose you inquire what experienced men are advising boys to do. There is the president of Princeton University for instance, John Grier Hibben, who says he would give the same advice to boys this fall that he gives them at any time, only he would emphasize it as we face war conditions. 'The completion of their education,' he says, 'is a patriotic obligation of our young boys.'

"And another college president, E. M. Hopkins of Dartmouth, gives a good reason for this 'patriotic duty.' He says: 'The sacrifices that are being made by men of all nations who are actively in military service will fall of their largest importance if the youth of the land are not equipped by education to hold the advantages in time to come that are being fought for.'"

"I read that," said Oscar, "in the last number of The American Boy. He says, too, that a boy who doesn't stay in school when he might, he could be called a criminal, if he were not excused because of lack of understanding. But these are school men; of course they see it that way."

"Yes, there is something in that," returned Uncle Sam, "but what does Secretary of War Baker say in that same article? He says that the most useful thing a boy can do is to finish his high school course, and Secretary Daniels of the Navy says the same thing, only he adds that as this is 'the most momentous year of the present age for the United States and the world, it is a time to think seriously and work earnestly.'

"And Major General Wood, what does he think? 'Every boy,' he says, 'should finish his school course. We shall secure more men under the draft than we can arm at the present time. Boys should remember that they are now serving in the best possible way by preparing themselves to serve more efficiently when the time comes. It is a great mistake for half-educated boys to rush to the colors now. We don't need them.'"

"Guess I'll go and read that big magazine article over again," said Oscar. And he did, and was convinced that the patriotic thing for him to do was to stay in school, and work harder than he ever did before in his life.

THE BIRTHDAY ROSE.

Tom finished his breakfast soberly. He had heard his father say that tomorrow would be mother's birthday, and Tom did want to give his mother a birthday present.

On his way to school Tom passed a florist's shop, and there in the window were some wonderful roses. If he could only buy her a rose! But he had no money, and he tried to think of some way by which he could earn enough money to pay for a rose.

Tom knew that he must go to school, but as soon as school was out he would earn the money in some way. He thought very hard about that possible way. What could little boys do?

It seemed as if school never would let out that day. But finally it did, and just as Tom was about to leave the room the teacher called to him:

"Tom come here, please."

Of course he had to go, but every moment was precious to him now.

"I wonder," said the teacher, kindly, "if you would take a note for me to a lady who lives near you?"

Now, Tom wasn't at all anxious to take the note, but the teacher started to write, and of course he knew he would have to take it. What a nuisance!

On his way he passed the florist's again, and looked longingly in the window.

The lady to whom the note was addressed came to the door herself. She seemed quite upset after reading the letter.

"Would you mind running an errand for me?" she asked him.

Oh, dear, he just hated to, but the lady had disappeared into the house before he could answer.

"If you will go to the drug store and bring back the prescription filled I will give you ten cents," she said.

Would he go? My, how fast his little legs did carry him! Ten cents! Why, that surely would buy the rose! He held the prescription tightly, and when he handed it to the druggist, he said:

"Please, I'm in a hurry."

He did not even glance at the florist's window as he ran back to the house, but a little later he proudly entered the shop and asked for a rose.

"It's to be a birthday rose," he said as he clasped the precious flower.

TRIXIE BOOTS.

Trixie Boots, a Boston terrier, has all sorts of amusing tricks which she will do at the order of her mistress. One of the most unusual is smoking cigarettes; tho we do not approve of this habit in young girls of Trixie's age. Trixie also smokes a little pipe. She can tell money from other kinds of paper. One day Trixie's mistress decided to test her on this subject, so she placed a dollar in the wastebasket and covered it up well with trash. Then she called Trixie and told her to find the money. After looking around the room for it, Trixie overturned the wastebasket and picked out the dollar from all the other papers in the basket and brought it to her mistress.

Whenever Trixie sees both her master and mistress getting ready to go out, she goes to the place where her little sweater is kept and brings it to one of them to put it on her

Her most valuable trick, however (to the housekeeper) is the one which she does at mealtimes. She has a little bed in one corner of a room, and whenever she is given a bone, no matter in what part of the house she is, she will take it to her little bed, never placing it on the floor to eat it.

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WAR and WOMEN

Registration of Women.

Uncle Sam demands universal service. In his hour of need he has called to the colors every man, woman and child in the United States. Hundreds of thousands of our men, because of their youth and their physical strength, are given the privilege of bearing arms and keeping the invaders from our shores. Many millions more American women, who are ineligible to bear arms, have just as important duties to perform for their country. To all is given the same code of honor and the same rigid standards of patriotism by which to live thru the days that are before us. For this greater army there is no exemption board. The time and strength which they should give to their country's service is a matter for each individual conscience to decide. But this greater army battles as truly for the honor of democracy, for that life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness which were the gifts bequeathed to us by the fathers of this country.

The woman's division of this great army is organized under act of Congress as the Woman's Committee, Council of National Defense. Its central committee and directing force is in Washington, headed by Dr. Anna Shaw. Under her direction a chairman has been appointed for each State in the Union, who is authorized to appoint an executive committee to co-ordinate all existing forms of women's work within each individual State. By this plan waste of effort and overlapping of similar organizations who are doing not only war work, but the ordinary charitable, educational and benevolent work of peace times, is avoided. The keynote of the entire organization, both National and State, is service for the country, regardless of previous plans or personal preferences. To make this work practical and effective, the United States Government has asked the women of the country to register in order that the authorities may have a record of what the women of the country are willing and able to do, both at the present time and in the stress of any emergency that may arise. Several of the States have already taken this registration or census, and before many months it is hoped that the majority of women will be recorded and ready for any necessary work.

Any woman wishing to know how she may best serve her country with the time and strength she has to offer, can communicate either with the chairman of the local unit in her immediate town or county, or with the chairman of her State. For the information of all women the following list of State chairmen is herewith given:

Alabama—Mrs. James F. Hooper, Selma.

Alaska—Mrs. T. J. Donehoe, Valdez.

Arizona—Mrs. Eugene Brady O'Neill, 701 North Central avenue, Phoenix.

Arkansas—Mrs. Joseph Frauenthal, Conway.

California—Mrs. Herbert A. Gibbons, 1906 West Forty-Second Place, Los Angeles.

Colorado—Mrs. W. H. Kistler, 1100 North Seventh avenue, Denver.

Connecticut—Miss Caroline Ruutz-Rees, Rosemary Hall, Greenwich.

Delaware—Mrs. Charles R. Miller, Wilmington.

District of Columbia—Mrs. Arabella Hopkins, 1826 Massachusetts avenue.

Florida—Mrs. W. S. Jennings, 1845 Main street, Jacksonville.

Georgia—Mrs. Samuel M. Inman, 752 Peachtree street, Atlanta.

Idaho—Mrs. Samuel N. Hays, 612 Franklin street, Boise.

Illinois—Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen, 120 West Adams street, Chicago.

Indiana—Mrs. Carolyn Fairbanks, 310 West Berry street, Ft. Wayne.

Iowa—Mrs. Francis W. Whitley, Webster City.

Kansas—Mrs. W. A. Johnston, Topeka.

Kentucky—Mrs. Helm Bruce, Louisville.

Louisiana—Miss Hilda Phelps, New Orleans.

Maine—Mrs. Frederick H. Abbott, Saco.

Maryland—Mrs. Edward Shoemaker, 522 Park avenue, Baltimore.

Massachusetts—Mrs. Nathaniel Thayer, State House, Boston.

Michigan—Mrs. Caroline Bartlett Crane, Kalamazoo.

Minnesota—Mrs. T. G. Winter, State House, 2617 Dean boulevard, Minneapolis.

Mississippi—Mrs. Edward McGehee, Edwards.

Missouri—Mrs. B. F. Bush, 905 Locust street, St. Louis.

Montana—Mrs. Tyler B. Thompson, Missoula.

Nebraska—Miss Sarka B. Herbkova, 105 Mechanical Arts Hall, State University, Lincoln.

Nevada—Mrs. Pearls Buckner Ellis, Carson City.

New Hampshire—Mrs. Mary I. Wood, Postoffice Drawer 88, Portsmouth.

New Jersey—Mrs. Charles W. Stockton, Ridgewood.

New Mexico—Mrs. W. E. Lindsey, Santa Fe.

New York, Mrs. William Grant Brown, Hotel Astor, 7th Broadway, New York.

North Carolina—Mrs. Eugene Reilly, Charlotte.

North Dakota—Mrs. H. G. Vick, Cavalier.

Ohio—Mrs. George Zimmerman, 224 Bernard avenue, Fremont.

Oklahoma—Mrs. Eugene B. Lawson, Nowata.

Oregon—Mrs. Charles H. Castner, Hood River.

Pennsylvania—Mrs. J. Willis Martin, Chestnut Hill.

Rhode Island—Mrs. Rush Sturges, 110 Benevolent street, Providence.

South Carolina—Mrs. T. Lee St. Mayes, Greenville.

South Dakota—Dr. Helen F. Peabody, Sioux Falls.

Tennessee—Mrs. George W. Denny, Knoxville.

Texas—Mrs. Fred Fleming, 1934 North Carroll avenue, Dallas.

Utah—Mrs. W. M. Williams, Bishop Building, Salt Lake City.

Vermont—Mrs. John H. Weeks, 93 Maple street, Middlebury.

Virginia—Mrs. B. B. Munford, 503 East Grace street, Richmond.

Washington—Mrs. Winneld R. Smith, Cobb Building, Seattle.

West Virginia—Mrs. J. G. Cochran, 1616 Market street, Parkersburg.

Wisconsin—Mrs. Henry H. Morgan, State House, Madison.

Wyoming—Mrs. R. A. Morton, Cheyenne.

THE REAPER.

FRENCH peasant woman reaping grain while her little child plays in the heaped-up grasses. This scene exemplifies the spirit of woman in France today. While the men are fighting the Germans in the trenches the women spend all day in the fields, doing all sorts of agricultural labor, for the poilus must be fed. The photograph was taken in the district recaptured from the Germans along the Somme. Many of the inhabitants, hearing of the retreat, hurried homeward and found their places of birth but a heap of stones.

HEARTS IN THE WAR.

There is an old saying, not new to any of us, that where the treasure is, there is the heart also, writes Anna Katherine Green Rohlfs in the Women's Press.

It is so true a saying that I have never heard it contradicted.

It is so true that I am going to use it in the appeal I am about to make to you.

We cannot all go to war; many of us cannot even give it active assistance. But we can all make it our war, by putting our hearts into it; and, as I have already shown you, the way for us to put our hearts into it is to put into it our treasure.

And what do I mean by treasure? Our boys? For those who have given them, yes. But for those who have not, I mean our savings, the little more—in some cases the much more—than we need for our weekly living.

The little more? I hear the poor man laugh. "My little more is a dollar," he says. "What can a dollar do?"

Much. It makes you one of the great company armed for fight and building for the future Peace of the world. It lifts you from the position of an onlooker to that of a participant, and what we participate in becomes a matter into which, not only our hearts, but our souls enter, and where heart and soul are engaged, a moral force is created which is the strongest backing that can be given to our soldiers soon to be fighting overseas.

Think of it! You have a dollar or two dollars, or perhaps, twenty which you do not need just now for absolute necessities. You might like to spend it on pleasure or a lot of coveted furniture or an article of showy clothing (I am speaking to the women now), or perhaps you are of a thrifty cast of mind and would like to add it to your store in bank, or shall I say stocking?

Very good; but that won't be helping your country in its need; that will be helping yourself. I do not quarrel with that. Man has a right to think of himself, for when he thinks of himself if he is a man at all, he thinks of those he loves, of those who are dependent on him—wife, children, friends.

But you can do all this and give aid to the country, too. A loan is not a gift. Men who die in the trenches give their lives, we are simply asked to loan, not to give, our treasure.

It will all come back. First, in the interest you will be entitled to draw, and secondly, in sale, if you are driven to the wall and need the money.

You see I am addressing the man and woman of small means. For, after all, you are the hope of the world. It is from you, with your individual little making an aggregate of much, that the power to carry on and win this war with all its far-reaching spiritual results, must come.

PROBLEM OF THE FOREIGN WOMAN.

Have you ever thought about your neighbor—that woman next door? Or perhaps she lives in the flat downstairs? She has been in America only a few years, and nobody has shown much interest in her coming. Her husband has learned enough English to continue his trade. Her children are attending the public schools, and already she is separated from them by the new language that they have so easily learned. Nobody has been interested enough to teach her English, and the chances are that there is no one outside her own household with whom she can converse. Can you imagine what this war must mean to her? Can you not fancy the bewilderment with which she regards what little information—perhaps misinformation—she has picked up from the scraps of talk about her house? Suppose her boy has been drafted. Perhaps yours has been, too. If so, no one needs to tell you how great is her need of help and how necessary it is that she should learn, at least, to speak the language of the country of her children. This neighbor needs your help. Can you allow this patriotic service to go past unheeded?

In Chicago there is a movement begun that promises splendid results. Miss Mary McDowell, head resident of the University of Chicago Settlement, and a pioneer in work among the foreign classes, is devoting her time to this service under the Woman's Committee, Council of National Defense. She has published a pamphlet giving reasons for the imperative need for safeguarding these women. Classes in the English language have been opened in factories. In some cases employers have volunteered the use of part of the working time in order to have their employes taught English. Notices are now being published, thru the efforts of this committee, in the foreign language press, regarding the registration of women about the laws safeguarding labor and about all the things which now affect and interest women thruout the country. But in spite of all these efforts, the home-keeping foreign-language-speaking mother must depend largely upon her neighbors for help in these difficult times.

GIFTS FOR OUR SOLDIERS.

It is puzzling sometimes to know just what a soldier would like, says Marion Homes in the Chicago Daily News. A woman of middle age said to me the other day, "I have a young friend who is going away with his regiment and I did not know what to give him. He has a fond mother and a doting aunt and I knew that everything that could be put into a comfort bag, or knitted to keep him warm, that boy had. So I handed him a dollar bill, which, with my other contributions to the war, was all I could spare, and asked him to buy something for himself. And what do you think he bought? It was a volume of Service's poems!"

As for candy, nothing could be more acceptable. The average American fighting man loves it as well as he did in his toddling days when an all-day sucker represented his dream of bliss. A writer for an Eastern paper depicts the desolation of a sailor who could not procure candy because it was Sunday and the shop was closed. When it was suggested that the purchase could be made tomorrow, the jackie replied mournfully, "But my ship sails at daylight." So the decorator, being tender of heart, caused the shop to be opened, Sunday as it was, to this one customer; the candy, 60 cents' worth of it, was bought and the sailor went away happy.

Contributions of candy may answer the more important purpose of slaking a thirst for liquor. With the object of helping another whose husband drinks, more than one woman has written to me, "I find that my husband cares less for drink when I put preserves or jelly on the table."

In any case those who defend us on land, sea or in the air deserve to have everything that they like, and that we can give them.

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GENTLE JABS.

Turn flattery wrong side out and you have slander.

It is unkind to look a man's religion in the pocketbook.

A great mind doesn't necessarily require a large hat.

Thrift and stinginess are as similar as they are different.

Soft coal causes a lot of wrath that can't be turned away.

Nothing warms some men up like an application of cold cash.

If a man is incompetent he usually charges it to bad luck.

Many a man gives up a bad habit—after he gets tired of it.

When a wise man falls in love he gives his brain a vacation.

Men with long heads are capable of using them on short notice.

The man who believes all he says doesn't always say all he believes.

People seldom get that tired feeling carrying the burdens of others.

Instead of counting the cost of experience consider what it is worth to you.

The fewer creditors a man has the easier it is for him to look the world in the face.

If we are to judge people by what they say, some men must live on hay and thistles.

People are often sad because life is a riddle of which they have failed to guess the answer.

There's a slump in the market when you try to dispose of experience that cost you dear.

A word to the wise is sufficient—if he is paying for it at his end of the long distance telephone.

At the age of 49 a man gets busy and looks for some of the money he threw away at the age of 21.

All things may come to a man who waits—providing he has sense enough to wait in the right place.

Liberty is always represented as a female, but it is difficult for some married men to understand why.

Some men achieve matrimony, some have it thrust upon them and others are lucky enough to escape it.

At first a girl wants nothing but a husband, but after she gets him she wants nothing but his money.

"If girls would eat more onions they would have fewer calls from physicians," says a scientist—also from other young men.

It is impossible to live without working. Even those who are supposed to know how are really engaged in working somebody.

HOME AND HEALTH

FASHION NOTES.

The black silk frock should have a narrow belt of gray pique, a narrow band of gray pique around the lower edge of the collar and gray pique cuffs.

Among the things which ought to be included in every girl's wardrobe is a sleeveless overdress which she can slip on over any waist she may choose.

There is so much talk about simplicity for the fall styles that collars and cuffs will be the only means in lots of cases of fussing up a plain dress, hence the importance of the cuff. And if you don't believe this, just go inquiring and note how much better fitting the new organdie and linen and pique and Georgette cuffs are.

The new colors for fall surely sound inviting. Of course, there is a hint in the name of a color, but most of them deserve the attractive names which label them. Browns are being talked about considerably, snuff browns and castor browns, copper browns, clove brown, terra cotta, tobacco, or, to be exact, cigarette brown, and rust, all the warm shades. Grays are named appropriately, munition and tank, both on the battleship tone of last year. Citron is coming into the limelight as a blouse color. American blue, the color of the flag blue, will be popular and patriotic as well. Jade greens are interesting, as are also some bronze greens, or deep-sea greens. Reddish purples predominate as well as the lighter orchid and sweet-pea shades. There is an ibis coral, so named from the bird of brilliant plumage. Fuchsia and geranium reds offer bright contrast possibilities for combination with darker colors.

FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

If the top of the stove is crowded the oven can be used for cooking vegetables

Silver may be kept bright by polishing with a soft flannel saturated with ammonia.

Cream that is too thin to whip may be made to do so by adding the unbeaten white of an egg before beginning to whip.

After a fowl of any kind is cleaned the inside should be rubbed thoroly with a piece of lemon before the dressing is put in.

If rice is cooked in water it will absorb about three times its measure. If it is cooked in milk at least half as much more liquid will be necessary.

If when cooking macaroni or spaghetti the kettle in which it is to be cooked is greased it will not stick to the bottom and cook on.

If you want hot biscuits for breakfast, and do not care to get up early, mix the dough and put the biscuits the night before, put them in the refrigerator and in the morning they are ready to pop into the oven.

If the skins of potatoes are thoroly scrubbed before baking, it is a good idea to eat the entire potato. The mineral matter lying close to the skin is in this way eaten, and the skin has the beneficial effect on the system that all coarse food matter possesses.

NEEDLEWORK NOTES.

A little trick discovered by a girl who has more ingenuity than time to make use of it, should be of help to others similarly situated. This girl says she would like to make her own fine collars of Georgette or pique or satin, but to get any amount of handwork takes too much time. So she buys her collars ready made at the neckwear counter, but—and a long but—it is not easy to get the right shape with the right neck line to fit her various frocks. Therefore, she buys usually a collar larger than she needs, cuts off the neckband and shapes her neck to suit her frock, tucking it to make it smaller if needed. Her collars always look as if they grow from her dress.

A woman who keeps her wits about her is now engaged in providing her friends for a modest charge with stockings to match their jersey and other frocks for sport and street. She gets a small amount of the jersey cloth and cuts out the stockings after a pattern evolved from her own imagination. The seams are done with the machine attachment being sold now for making seams in jersey cloth. An engaging touch is being given to these homemade stockings by the addition of hand embroidered clocks and instep decoration of silk or wool embroidered motif of the dress of which they are designed to be a part.

HEALTH NOTES.

A remedy for boils, so simple that it is often overlooked, is water as warm as can be borne. Apply wet linen to the affected part and frequently moisten it.

When the skin cracks between the toes it is annoying. Excessively dry and hot feet are particularly susceptible to this condition, and so are feet of an acidy condition. Zinc ointment spread over the cracked surface will be found to be healing.

It is a valuable thing to know what to do when a person has an epileptic fit. The patient should be caught in the arms of the bystander and laid gently upon his back, with something placed under his head for a pillow, and everything tight should be removed from his neck. Insert a handkerchief, cork or some other available thing between the teeth to prevent the tongue being bitten, and wait until a physician arrives.

WOMAN TODAY.

Husband catching is more worth while today than ever before. The girl regards marriage as a lifelong support to be gained by being skilful enough to charm some man. Extreme styles worn by women now represent an attempt on the part of the girl to attract a husband, and her pretty clothes are getting results.

These are conclusions drawn by Professor E. A. Ross of the University of Wisconsin in an address before the students of the University of Iowa on "The Changing Social Position of Women."

"Our young women are sometimes referred to as 'queens,' and quite properly, too, since being the wife involves less labor now than ever before. A proposal of marriage is an invitation to ease and luxury. The modern married woman has only about one-fifth as much to do in the home as had her grandmother, and statistics show that she has only about one-half as many children to look after," Professor Ross pointed out.

"About 20 per cent of today's married women enjoy a life of luxury such as was enjoyed by only about 2 per cent of our grandmothers.

"There are now as many college girls as college men. Four-fifths of the schoolteachers are women. Eight hundred occupations are open to women. This makes it appear that woman's weight in society is on the increase, but such a conclusion is drawn only from a surface current in modern tendencies. A mighty undercurrent indicates that feminine weight in society is not increasing. The fact that women get all their support without effort causes them to become subservient to their husbands in all things as a sort of payment for their cares.

"Altho self-support is gaining in attractiveness, matrimony is gaining in attractiveness more rapidly. The ease and luxury which are coming to be associated with marriage make it the goal of most of the modern girls. The one out of ten who remains unmarried leaves no daughters to inherit her affinity for a business life and unconcern for man."

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUG. 24, 1912:

Of the **Chicago Ledger**, published weekly at Chicago, Ill., for October 1, 1917. State of Illinois, County of Cook (ss.). Before me, a notary public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared W. D. Boyce, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the business manager of the **Chicago Ledger**, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the act of Aug. 24, 1912, embodied in section 443, Postal Laws and Regulations.

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, W. D. Boyce Company, 500 N. Dearborn St., Chicago. Editor, A. M. Kerr, 500 N. Dearborn St., Chicago. Managing Editor, W. D. Boyce, 500 N. Dearborn St., Chicago. Business Manager, W. D. Boyce, 500 N. Dearborn St., Chicago.

2. That the owners are: W. D. Boyce, 9,499 shares, 500 N. Dearborn St., Chicago. W. D. Boyce, trustee for B. and J. Boyce, 500 shares; 9,999 shares out of 10,000.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities, are: No bonds; no mortgages. In regard to section 2 of the law, the **Chicago Ledger** does not accept payment for any editorial or other reading matter printed as news.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

Signed:

W. D. Boyce

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 1st day of October, 1917.

(Seal) E. E. WOOTRING.

(My commission expires May 29, 1920.)

ACTRESS TELLS SECRET

A Well Known Actress Tells How She Darkened Her Gray Hair With a Simple Home Made Mixture.

Miss Blanche Rose, a well-known actress, who darkened her gray hair with a simple preparation which she mixed at home, in a recent interview at Chicago, Ill., made the following statement: "Any lady or gentleman can darken their gray hair and make it soft and glossy with this simple recipe, which they can mix at home. To a half pint of water add 1 oz. of bay rum, a small box of Barbo Compound, and ¼ oz. of glycerine. These ingredients can be bought at any drug store at very little cost. Apply to the hair twice a week until it becomes the required shade. This will make a gray haired person look 20 years younger. It makes the hair soft and glossy, is not sticky or greasy and does not rub off.

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No Extra Charges

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In the spring of 1893 I was attacked by Muscular and Inflammatory Rheumatism. I suffered as only those who have it know, for over three years. I tried remedy after remedy, and doctor after doctor, but such relief as I received was only temporary. Finally, I found a remedy that cured me completely, and it has never returned. I have given it to a number who were terribly afflicted and even beridden with Rheumatism, and it effected a cure in every case.

I want every sufferer from any form of rheumatic trouble to try this marvelous healing power. Don't send a cent; simply mail your name and address and I will send it free to try. After you have used it and it has proven itself to be that long-looked-for means of curing your Rheumatism, you may send the price of it, one dollar, but, understand, I do not want your money unless you are perfectly satisfied to send it. Isn't that fair? Why suffer any longer when positive relief is thus offered you free? Don't delay. Write today.

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No Room for Two.

In the riding school of a certain regiment a number of recruits were being put thru their paces, learning how to ride. On the command "Halt!" one recruit was shot out of the saddle on the horse's neck, and in trying to regain the seat and stirrups caused his mount to rear and kick, with the result one hind leg was caught in the stirrup.

"Hi, there, Hackenschmidt! Get back on yer mat, cawn't yer!" roared the instructor.

The recruit, getting a glimpse of what was happening behind, replied between the bumps:

"Well, if this blinking [bump] horse [bump] is coming any here—I'm getting off!"

What Bliss!

It was the night of nights. Isabella had said "Yes," Isabella's father had said "Yes" and Isabella's "young man" was happy. So was Isabella.

Minutes ticked away as they sat hand in hand, not caring for conversation, blissfully content to sit and sit and sit in each other's proximity. But suddenly Isabella's young man grew restless. He began to twitch and pull fearsome faces. His facial contortions got worse and worse, till at last Isabella got scared and cried:

"What is it, beloved? Tell your Isabella! Are you subject to fits?"

"No; of course not," said the young man, soothingly. "My eyeglasses are falling off and I don't want to leave go of your lovely little hands."

Gurgles!

Between Two Fires.

"I educated one of my boys to be a doctor and the other to be a lawyer," said Father Corntassel.

"You should be very proud of them," announced the visitors. "That seems like an excellent arrangement."

"I don't know about that," replied the aged agriculturist; it looks as tho it was a-going to break up the family. I got run into by a locomotive, and one of 'em wants to cure me and the other wants me to go lame, so he can sue for damages."

Poser for Father.

Mildmay had never been in the habit of punishing his children, leaving that disagreeable duty to his wife, but the other day one of his numerous progeny became very unruly and he was obliged to say: "Flora, if you don't keep quiet I shall have to whip you."

"Pooh," retorted the little 3-year-old, with a contemptuous toss of her head, "you isn't the mother!"

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W. D. BOYCE COMPANY - - - - Publisher

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The Path-Master.

(Continued From Page 4.)

voice: "Be yew calculatin' tew mosey, Dan McCloud?"

"You had better stay where you are," said McCloud; "I'm armed."

"Ye be?" replied a new voice; "then come aout o' that or we'll snake ye aout!"

Byram began moving toward the house, shotgun raised.

"Stop!" cried McCloud, jumping to his feet.

But Byram came on, gun leveled, and McCloud retreated to his front door.

"Give it to him!" shouted the game-warden; "shoot his windows out!" There was a flash from the road and a load of buckshot crashed thru the window overhead.

Before the echoes of the report died away, McCloud's voice was heard again, calmly warning them back.

Something in his voice arrested the general advance.

"I don't know why I don't kill you in your tracks, Byram," said McCloud; "I've wanted the excuse often enough. But now I've got it and I don't want it, somehow. Let me alone, I tell you."

"He's no good!" said the warden, distinctly. Byram crept thru the picket fence and lay close, hugging his shotgun.

"I tell you I intend to pay my taxes," cried McCloud, desperately. "Don't force me to shoot!"

The sullen rage was rising; he strove to crush it back, to think of the little path-master.

"For God's sake, go back!" he pleaded, hoarsely.

Suddenly Byram started running toward the house, and McCloud clapped his rifle to his cheek and fired. Four flashes from the road answered his shot, but Byram was down in the grass screaming, and McCloud had vanished into his house.

Charge after charge of buckshot tore thru the flimsy clapboards; the moonlight was brightened by pale flashes, and the timbered hills echoed the cracking shots.

After a while no more shots were fired, and presently a voice broke out in the stillness:

"Be yew layin' low, or be yew dead, Dan McCloud?"

There was no answer.

"Or be yew playin' foxy possum?" continued the voice, with nasal rising inflection.

Byram began to groan and crawl toward the road.

"Let him alone," he moaned; "let him alone. He's got grit, if he hain't got nothin' else."

"Air yew done for?" demanded Tansey, soberly.

"No, no," groaned Byram, "I'm jest winged. He done it, an' he was right. Didn't he say he'd pay his taxes? He's plumb right. Let him alone, or he'll come out an' murder us all!"

Byram's voice ceased; Tansey mounted the dark slope, peering among the brambles, treading carefully.

"Whar be ye, Byram?" he bawled.

But it was ten minutes before he found the young man, quite dead, in the long grass.

With an oath Tansey flung up his gun and drove a charge of buckshot crashing thru the front door. The door quivered; the last echoes of the shot died out; silence followed.

Then the shattered door swung open slowly, and McCloud reeled out, still clutching his rifle. He tried to raise it; he could not, and it fell clattering. Tansey covered him with his shotgun, cursing him fiercely. "Up with them hands o' yourn!" he snarled; but McCloud only muttered and began to rock and sway in the doorway.

Tansey came up to him, shotgun in hand. "Yew hev done fur Byram," he said; "yew air bound to set in the chair for this."

McCloud, leaning against the sill, looked at him with heavy eyes.

"It's well enough for you," he muttered; "you are only a savage; but Byram went to college—and so did I—and we are nothing but savages like you, after all—nothing but savages——"

He collapsed and slid to the ground, lying hunched up across the threshold.

"I want to see the path-master!" he cried sharply.

A shadow fell across the shot-riddled door snow-white in the moonshine.

"She's here," said the game-warden, soberly.

But McCloud had started talking and muttering to himself.

Toward midnight the whippoorwill began a breathless calling from the garden.

McCloud opened his eyes.

"Who is that?" he asked irritably.

"He's looney," whispered Tansey; "he gabbles to hisself."

The little path-master knelt beside him. He stared at her stonily.

"It is I," she whispered.

"Is it you, little path-master?" he said, in an altered voice. Then something came into his flimsy eyes which she knew was a smile.

"I wanted to tell you," he began, "I will work out my taxes—somewhere—for you——"

The path-master hid her white f... in her hands. Presently the collie dog came and laid his head on her shoulder.

* * *

The Kaiser's Spy.

(Continued From Page 10.)

before these events, Theodoric Bryce awoke and, looking across his couch, discovered that his bedfellow was gone. Joffre had deserted him, and he smiled as he glanced about the room for the big Manx.

Suddenly a strange noise fell upon his ear. It came from the hall, and sounded as if something was being rolled back and forth just beyond the door. Filled with curiosity the detective sprang from bed and proceeded to investigate.

Sure enough, Joffre was having a little sport of his own. He was playing with a singular little object which he was rolling over the floor with all the delight of his kittenish days.

"What have you got, Joffre?" asked the detective, stooping and putting down his hand. "By my life, you have found a queer thing for your pleasure!"

The animal released the object, which was a silver-gray cone much the worse for the dust on the floor. Theodoric Bryce carried the find back into his room. A faint ticking came from the interior of the cone, and at this Mr. Bryce's eyes enlarged.

"A pretty thing, but as deadly as death itself," he said, in a low voice. "Some one has been trying to give me seraphic pinions before my time. We'll see."

He took from the sink in an adjoining room a pitcher of water into which he poured some darkish liquid from a bottle on a shelf.

Into this mixture he dropped the cone and watched it as it almost immediately began to crumble.

"This is what I call getting the better of the long iron arm of Germany," he laughed. "Aha! There is the minute clockwork. It is harmless now. I say, Master Joffre, you've been pretty close to the feline paradise."

The big cat looked up into his master's face as if pleased.

A hasty footstep came down the hall, the door was opened and a morning newspaper was thrown inside. The detective picked it up and glanced at the glaring headlines.

"Another blow," said he. "Red Bank has felt the long finger of the Hohenzollern. I wonder how Van Dorn will take the news? And the girl?"

He did not stop to read the particulars of the wreck of the munitions plant, but threw the paper aside and put on his clothes.

There was a little grillroom not far off. Mr. Bryce sought it out and ordered his usual breakfast of eggs and toast.

"Big news this morning," said a man at the nearest table, with a look at the sleuth. "Aren't we ever going to get at these foreign spies?"

Mr. Bryce did not answer.

"One doesn't know how soon he may be blown into bits in the interest of German kultur."

"You're right," replied the detective, and then he thought of the little thing Joffre had found in the hall.

This interesting story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you but little, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Down on the Farm.

(Continued From Page 23.)

a sort of composite mixture of many things. It is the size of a grape, looks like a young watermelon, and tastes like a combination of lemon, lime, gall, acetic acid and the wrath of the devil, and no one has yet discovered where it derived its name, as no goose is enough of a goose to eat the gooseberry.

One of the chief objections to the gooseberry is that it is so careless about its personal appearance, and looks as if it always needed a shave, and besides this is so surrounded by thorns that the farmer's wife takes her life in her own hands every time she attempts to pick it, and she is lucky if she does not get herself crucified in the attempt.

Practically the only use for the gooseberry is in the building of pie, and in this it has to be mixed with seven parts sugar, or the eater will promptly acquire lockjaw.

There is about as much pleasure in eating an untamed gooseberry as there is in chewing up a ten-grain quinine pill; but with the former the medicinal effects are entirely lacking, and the chances are that medical aid will be needed afterward.

One good feature about the gooseberry is that it is hard to catch with safety, and this is an aid to mankind, as it prohibits many severe cases of acute cramps which otherwise would be more numerous.

Another of these comic sketches will

Little Tim.

(Continued From Page 13.)

curving base with a cry of pain, rolled into the shadow and lay still.

The anthem flowed on, but the child did not hear it. "We thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou are merciful," it pealed; "that Thy strong arm doth save the righteous and confound the wicked!" and it swelled and died away. Then the pastor's lingual music came again, mellow, pleasant, perfect; round, edgeless words that wove like velvet shuttles a dissolving, beauteous fabric before his people. For an hour it rose and fell, science and revelation, linked and interfused with poetry and fine allusion; but ragged Tim, lying there in the shadow with his oozing temple on the uncushioned granite, gave no heed.

The pastor's sermon melted into silence, the glinting organ-pipes throbbed and trembled with their freight of melody again, wave after wave of blent, harmonious voices floated out upon the buoyant, billowing medium of the organ pipes, the benediction fell, and out the arching entrance rustled the throng, with smiles and salutations, flash of jewel and eye, soft speech and happy laughter, but the little rag-heap in the shadow made no sign.

The doorway to the Father's house was closed; sleep lapped the pastor and his people in its dream-engendering fleece; dew gathered on the wall above the fallen child, and crickets in the grass-fringe around the flag-stones rasped the silence.

The moon rode slowly over, the stars strove to take it in their silver net but lost it to the dawn; the east took fire with morning.

But little Tim slept on. No friend was there, no word of pity; only a cricket singing at his ear, and the dew trickling down the cold wall upon his piteous face, as if the very rocks shed tears for their dead.

* * *

The Detective Trio.

(Continued From Page 13.)

but she does savvy a five-dollar bill and trades her mop and pail and apron for it. So Miss Eunice tucks up her skirt, puts on the apron, puts her hat in the empty pail, tousles her hair and smears up her hands and face with dust from the floor, walks by Friend Casey as cool as you please, and goes up the stairs. Then she makes herself human again, takes the elevator down and beats it out of town.

"Her idea was at first to throw suspicion onto herself and away from her mother by makin' the getaway. But the more she thought about it, the surer she was that the Greaser had done it, an' so she went and hunted him up. Now, isn't that some girl for you? I've wondered——"

Mackinson paused thoughtfully. "What have you wondered?" demanded Reynell at last.

Mackinson shook his head. "No," he said, answering himself. "I guess a girl as smart as that would be too smart to look at a cop like me. And—no, I guess, too, a man wouldn't want to have a wife as smart as that, would he?"

"He certainly would not," affirmed Reynell, out of his vast inexperience.

In next week's Ledger will begin another series of remarkable detective stories, each story complete in itself. They were written by the famous author, Hapsburg Liebe, and if you wish to be really entertained, don't fail to read them. They are the thrilling exploits of "Scarlett Radford, Detective," and the first story is entitled "The Missing Bank Clerk." There will be four short stories in this interesting series.

* * *

Why, Indeed?

For an hour the Captain had been lecturing his men on "The Duties of a Soldier," and he thought that the time had come for him to test the results of his discourse.

Casting his eye around the room, he fixed on Private Murphy as his first victim.

"Private Murphy," he asked, "why should a soldier be ready to die for his country?"

The Irishman scratched his head for a while; then an ingratiating and enlightening smile flitted across his face. "Sure, Captain," he said pleasantly, "you're quite right. Why should he?"

* * *

A Commandment.

A teacher in a big school had given lessons to an infants' class on the ten commandments. In order to test their memories, she asked:

"Can any little child give me a commandment with only four words in it?"

A hand was raised immediately.

"Well?" said the teacher.

"Keep off the grass," was the reply.

titled, "The Pumpkin." ... sketch is a "scream."

* * *

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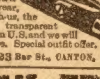

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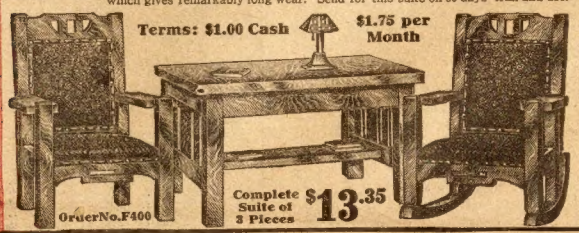

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